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# STARS AND STRIPES®

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## US troops withdrawing from Syria

By JOHN VANDIVER  
AND COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump has begun withdrawing U.S. forces from Syria, the White House announced Wednesday, declaring victory over Islamic State fighters in the country despite ongoing skirmishes and concerns from others in Washington that the terrorist group

might mount a comeback.

“Five years ago, ISIS was a very powerful and dangerous force in the Middle East, and now the United States has defeated the territorial caliphate,” White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said in a statement. “We have started returning troops home as we transition to the next phase of this campaign.”

However, Dana White, the Pentagon’s top spokeswoman, said Wednesday in a

statement that all territory once held by ISIS in Iraq and Syria has been liberated, though “the campaign against ISIS is not over.” She declined further discussion of the mission, citing “protection and operational security reasons.”

Officials at the Pentagon have spent recent days trying to convince Trump to leave at least some troops in the eastern portion of Syria where they have been

**SEE SYRIA ON PAGE 4**

**Follow the latest developments on Syria at stripes.com**

U.S. Marines board an MV-22 Osprey on their way to a site near Al-Tanf Garrison, Syria, in September.

CARLOS LOPEZ/Courtesy of the U.S. Marine Corps

## Temporary computer network outage hits US military in South Korea

By KIM GAMEL  
*Stars and Stripes*

SEOUL, South Korea — The U.S. military was hit recently by a computer network outage in South Korea, but the problem has largely been resolved, a spokesman said Wednesday. No cause was given.

The temporary outage occurred in what

the military calls Area I and Area II, which includes Seoul and areas close to the border with North Korea.

“Technicians from the 1st Signal Brigade began immediate restorative action and the network is currently at 90 percent,” Yongsan Garrison spokesman Wes Hayes told Stars and Stripes. “Due to the sensitive nature of the network and to maintain cyber security,

no further information can be provided.”

The military communications brigade works to support the ability of U.S. Forces Korea and other commands on the divided peninsula “to lead, direct and maneuver available forces during armistice, crisis or war,” Hayes said.

**SEE OUTAGE ON PAGE 2**

**The temporary outage occurred in what the military calls Area I and Area II, which includes Seoul and areas close to the border with North Korea.**

# MILITARY

## How do Army snipers find new ghillie suit?

By WILL MORRIS  
Stars and Stripes

A group of Army snipers are finally getting their eyes and hands on prototypes of the Army's new ghillie suit in "bench tests" at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida.

As part of the evaluation exercise, some snipers wore models of the proposed Improved Ghillie System, or IGS, and concealed themselves in forest and arid settings. The other snipers tried to spot them from distances as far away as about 655 feet and as close as about 33 feet.

Staff Sgt. Ricky Labistre, a tester and sniper section team leader with 1st Battalion, 160th Infantry Regiment of the California National Guard, said ghillie suits improve a sniper's ability to remain camouflaged and concealed.

"Anytime we can improve our survivability, it is very welcomed," Labistre said in an Army statement.

The evaluation took place for three days in November. The Army plans to buy about 3,500 ghillie suits to outfit the approximately 3,300 snipers in the service, the statement said.

The Army is set to replace the current

Flame Resistant Ghillie System, which all snipers are currently issued — but rarely use operationally — with the IGS, which is simpler and more modular, Program Executive Office Soldier officials said in a statement.

"The current kit is thick and heavy and comes with a lot of pieces that aren't used," said Maj. WaiWah Ellison, assistant product manager for durable goods. "Soldiers are creating ghillie suits with their own materials to match their personal preference. We want to make the IGS simpler and modular so the snipers will use what is issued to them instead of relying on outside resources."

Often ghillie suits are made of camouflage uniforms reinforced with canvas and pieces of rain gear sewn and glued in for reinforcement, with burlap copiously attached all over the suit.

Snipers, except for those fighting in urban terrain, traditionally spend much of their shooting time in a "creep," pursuing a target in the prone position. A soldier's creation of his first ghillie suit is seen as a rite of passage into the sniper community.

If the suits in the evaluation pass the Army's requirements, they will go on to



MICHEL SAURET/Courtesy of the U.S. Army Reserve

Sgt. Ian Rivera-Aponte, a U.S. Army Reserve sniper and infantryman with the Honolulu-based 100th Infantry Battalion, poses for a promotional photo shoot for Army Reserve recruiting at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., in July.

the limited user evaluation phase, Ellison said.

"Whichever system passes this benchmark testing, the Army will purchase a limited amount and send them to units to use for training and even operational purposes overseas," he said. "The units that receive

these will provide feedback through surveys and other methods that provide quantifiable data that helps us choose the user's preference."

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## Outage: Military network said to have been fully offline for about 6 days

### FROM FRONT PAGE

He declined to comment on the cause or provide more information due to security concerns.

A person familiar with the situation, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue, said the net-

work went down about two weeks ago and was fully offline for about six days before it was mostly restored. The timing could not be confirmed.

The outage comes as fears about the ability of hackers to breach U.S. systems are high.

Last week, National Security Agency official Rob Joyce was quoted as saying that Chinese cyberactivity targeting critical infrastructure in the United States has risen in recent months. The Wall Street Journal also reported Friday that Chinese hackers

have breached Navy contractors to steal missile plans and other information.

North Korean hackers also breached the South Korean military's computer network in 2016, stealing several classified documents, including jointly de-

veloped U.S.-South Korean war-time operational plans, officials in Seoul have said.

China and North Korea have denied responsibility for cyberattacks on foreign countries.

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## MILITARY

# State Department backs Turkey missile sale

By TONY CAPACCIO and NICK WADHAMS  
*Bloomberg News*

WASHINGTON — The U.S. State Department has notified Congress of a proposal to sell the Patriot air and missile defense system to Turkey, a move that signals a key breakthrough with a NATO ally that had been inching closer to Russia.

The potential \$3.5 billion deal for the system, which is manufactured by Raytheon Co. and Lockheed Martin Corp., would help bolster Turkey as it confronts instability in the region, according to a statement by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency posted on Tuesday.

"This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of

the United States by improving the security of a key NATO Ally on the front lines of the fight against terrorism," according to the statement.

Tensions between the U.S. and Turkey have been heightened in the past few years as the government of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan turned more authoritarian and the two allies disagreed over U.S. support for the Kurdish militias in Syria. In recent days, Erdogan threatened to send his forces in Syria toward Kurdish-held areas where U.S. troops are operating, raising the prospect of a battlefield confrontation between NATO's two biggest armed forces.

Trump administration officials seeking better relations were stymied by a dis-

agreement that threatened to turn into a crisis: Turkey's intention to purchase an advanced Russian anti-aircraft missile system, the S-400 Triumf.

Speaking to reporters in Washington last month, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said his country had wanted to buy Patriot missiles but was never able to get a commitment from Washington. He said there was no going back on the S-400 deal with Moscow but left the door open to buying U.S. hardware in the future.

"It's a big deal, because only a few months ago, analysts were predicting all doom and the end of nearly seven-decades-old U.S.-Turkey relationship," said Soner Cagaptay, the director of the Turkish re-

search program at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. With the Trump administration "agreeing to share some of its most sensitive technology to Ankara, this suggests a new phase in U.S.-Turkish ties, one driven by a new rapport between Presidents Erdogan and Trump, and aided by bureaucracies in both countries determined not to let the U.S.-Turkish relationship collapse," Cagaptay said.

The proposed deal, which must be approved by Congress, includes up to 140 Patriot missiles, radar and ground control stations. Congress has 15 days to review the proposed sale under streamlined procedures the State Department has in place for NATO allies.



JOANNA DELFIN/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

A Lone Sailor statue stands watch at the Ricardo J. Bordallo Governor's Complex in Hagatna, Guam.

## Lone Sailor statue unveiled on Guam

By CHRISTIAN LOPEZ  
*Stars and Stripes*

The 16th Lone Sailor statue, unveiled this month on Guam, embodies a special relationship between the island, Vietnamese-Americans and the Navy and its sister services, according to the CEO of the U.S. Navy Memorial.

Overlooking the Pacific Ocean at the Ricardo J. Bordallo Governor's Complex in Hagatna, the statue is the farthest west of a series of Lone Sailor statues erected across the country by the nonprofit memorial organization.

The Guam statue recalls the Navy's role in evacuating thousands of refugees who fled South Vietnam as the country fell to the North Vietnamese army at the end of the Vietnam War. The island was a safe harbor for those refugees, many of whom settled in the United States.

"This is where they came through, 111,000 of them," said retired Rear Adm. Frank Thorp, president and CEO of the U.S. Navy Memorial, at the dedication ceremony. "The Lone Sailor will stand proudly and will represent for those people every man and woman who has served in the Navy, who serves in the Navy today or who will serve in the future."

Guam's Lone Sailor is the newest addition at the governor's complex, known as Adelup Point, near the Guam Seal. The statue is surrounded by 19 benches

representing each village in the U.S. territory.

"This Lone Sailor will stand the watch at Adelup," according to a statement from Rear Adm. Shoshana Chatfield, Joint Region Marianas commander. "[It] looks out to that very important point where the Pacific Ocean meets the Philippine Sea, where great battles were generated, and great victories won on behalf of freedom; and the free and open Indo-Pacific that we cherish has its defense here on Guam."

The first Lone Sailor statue, the work of sculptor Stanley Bleifeld, was dedicated in October 1987 along with the Navy Memorial in Washington, D.C.

The Navy Memorial Statue City Program began in 1997 with a copy of the Lone Sailor placed at Recruit Training Command in Great Lakes, Ill., according to the U.S. Navy Memorial website.

The most recent statue — before Saturday's dedication in Guam — was placed in October 2017 at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. It overlooks the USS Arizona Memorial.

"Standing 7½ feet tall, the Lone Sailor has a sea bag by his side — representing the fact that sailors are global citizens, always ready, anytime, anywhere, to protect America's interests," Adm. Harry Harris, head of U.S. Pacific Command, said during a dinner for the Lone Sailor statue dedication in Hawaii.

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## Former Pentagon official's business ties to Amazon scrutinized

By AARON GREGG  
*The Washington Post*

A Silicon Valley start-up founder helped guide the U.S. military's cloud computing efforts as a Pentagon employee for more than a year, even though he had previously worked for Amazon's cloud computing division, widely seen as a front-runner for a pending \$10 billion cloud contract coveted by four of America's biggest technology companies, computing giant Oracle alleged in a recent lawsuit.

Oracle alleged in the suit that the start-up founder, a man named Deep Ubhi, had been engaged in business discussions with Amazon while he was still employed at the Pentagon. He left the government late last year and rejoined Amazon.

The possibility that Ubhi was biased toward Amazon as he helped plan high-stakes military procurements has put him at the center of a protracted legal battle involving the Defense Department, Amazon and Oracle. According to court documents he had been engaged in early planning and market research for what is known as the Joint Enterprise Defense Infrastructure, or "JEDI," which is designed as a departmentwide cloud computing infrastructure for the U.S. military. Oracle, the Redwood, Calif.-based software giant, has filed a lawsuit to block the contract award pending further investigation, arguing Ubhi's involvement has skewed the process in Amazon's favor.

Ubhi did not work for the Defense Department, he openly praised Amazon on Twitter. He also cheered the growth of TableHero, the Silicon Valley-based reservation-booking start-up he founded in 2015.

"Once an Amazonian, always an Amazonian. Proud today. Thank you, @JeffBezos," he tweeted on Jan. 30, 2017, referencing a news article noting that Bezos had pledged to fight President Donald Trump's immigration ban.

Ubhi did not respond to calls and emails Monday. In response

to a list of questions, an Amazon Web Services spokesman said "in both his previous and current capacity, Deep has worked on the AWS Commercial team and has never supported the AWS Public Sector organization," while also noting that the company does not comment on pending litigation. An AWS spokesman did not respond to multiple requests to make Ubhi available for an interview.

Heather Babb, a Defense Department spokeswoman, declined to comment on personnel matters because of pending litigation but defended the Defense Department's handling of the cloud procurement.

"From the beginning, the enterprise cloud initiative has been open, transparent and full," Babb wrote in an email. "The JEDI Cloud final request for proposals reflects the unique and critical needs of DOD, employing the best practices of competitive pricing and security and is not designed around any particular cloud service."

The contract has a ceiling of \$10 billion over a decade, and is expected to confer upon the winner a strong foothold for other opportunities as military agencies use it as a springboard for new artificial intelligence applications. The broader cloud adoption and AI capabilities is meant to support as seen as important to the Pentagon's ability to compete with Russia and China for military dominance.

Representatives from IBM, Microsoft, Amazon Web Services and Oracle confirmed that their respective companies submitted bids by the Oct. 12 deadline. An award is expected in April 2019.

From the moment of its public unveiling, the JEDI procurement has been dogged by assertions that it is biased in favor of Amazon Web Services. The online retail giant's cloud computing unit is widely viewed as a front-runner because it has years of experience handling classified data for the CIA, part of an earlier \$600 million contract.



# WAR ON TERRORISM

## Syria: Pentagon warns of instability

### FROM FRONT PAGE

supporting a mostly Kurdish militia, which has been fighting ISIS since 2014, a defense official said Wednesday. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, warned at least some fighting continued in the area, and a rapid, full withdrawal of troops could hurt the progress of the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces.

"There's still fighting. There's still ISIS fighters on the ground fighting hard," the official said, pointing out that U.S. and anti-ISIS coalition forces have conducted airstrikes against ISIS targets in Syria's Middle Euphrates Valley as recently as Monday.

The coalition reported Wednesday that it conducted more than 200 strikes against ISIS in Syria last week.

Neither Sanders nor White indicated whether all 2,000 U.S. troops would be removed from Syria or what the next phase of the mission would be. However, the defense official said the White House planned to remove all American troops from the fight, confirming reporting by multiple news organizations including Reuters and the Wall Street Journal. It was not clear how quickly they would be removed, the official added.

A Trump tweet Wednesday seemed to confirm that he intended a complete pull-out. "We have defeated ISIS in Syria, my only reason for being there during the Trump Presidency," Trump tweeted.

The decision was likely to be welcomed by NATO ally Turkey, but also casts uncertainty over the fate of U.S.-backed Kurdish troops in the region.

Syria and its allies Russia and Iran have

repeatedly denounced the U.S. military presence as illegal because it was undertaken without permission from the government in Damascus.

Trump has said he wants to pull U.S. troops out of Syria at some point and the country was not a place where U.S. forces would be permanently camped.

However, his own top military and national security advisers have long indicated the United States would have to maintain troops in eastern Syria to ensure the region was stable enough to thwart an attempted reconstitution of ISIS after its defeat.

In the last three weeks, Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, national security adviser John Bolton and Brett McGurk, the U.S. special envoy to the counter-ISIS campaign, have insisted publicly much work was left to be done by U.S. troops in Syria.

For example, Dunford said on Dec. 6 that U.S. troops completed only about 20 percent of their mission to train 35,000 to 40,000 local forces to provide security in areas cleared of ISIS.

"I'm not at all complacent about the work that remains to be done," Dunford said at the time. "... I would say we're well along in clearing ISIS from the ground that they've held in Syria, and we still have a lot of work to do in terms of the stabilization phase."

McGurk told reporters on Dec. 11 at the State Department that the stabilization effort would likely take years.

"It would be reckless if we were just to say, 'Well, the physical caliphate is defeated, so we can just leave now,'" he said. "I think anyone who's looked at a conflict like this would agree with that."

Members of Trump's own political party rallied against the decision in the hours after it was reported.

Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., told reporters that the advisers who helped Trump make the decision to withdraw troops from Syria have done a "great disservice" to the country.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, called Trump's plan "a huge Obama-like mistake," likening it to the former president's withdrawal of U.S. servicemen from Iraq in December 2011, which has been blamed in part for the rise of ISIS.

"A decision to withdraw will also be viewed as a boost to ISIS' desire to come back," Graham wrote on Twitter, adding it also puts "our allies, the Kurds at risk."

However, Sanders indicated the work was largely done for troops on the ground.

At least one Republican applauded Trump's decision.

Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., wrote on Twitter that he was "happy to see a President who can declare victory and bring our troops out of a war. It's been a long time since that has happened."

The pullout comes as Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said he intends to launch an offensive against the Kurdish forces in Syria's north. Such an offensive would risk bringing U.S. troops into conflict with the Turkish military.

Prior to White's statement in response to reports of the pullout, the Pentagon issued a short statement earlier Wednesday that troops continue to work with their partners in Syria.

U.S. troops in northern Syria have been a source of great tension with Turkey.

Ankara has long regarded Washington's Kurdish partners as terrorists and the main threat to Turkey. While the United States has drawn a distinction between its Kurd-

ish partners and the Kurdistan Workers Party, a U.S.-designated terrorist group, Turkey has remained unpersuaded.

U.S. Special Representative for Syria James Jeffrey, speaking at an Atlantic Council event in Washington on Monday, said the aim of the U.S. partnership with Kurdish Syrian Defense Forces was concerned with the fight against ISIS.

The United States isn't interested in helping the Kurds carve out autonomous territory, he said.

"That is not the policy of this administration and has not been the policy of other administrations," Jeffrey said.

Sanders also said Tuesday that Trump was willing to consider the possible extradition of U.S.-based cleric Pethullah Gulen, who lives in exile in America, but is blamed by Erdogan for the failed 2016 coup attempt in Turkey. Gulen has denied any involvement.

In a photo added in this week with Erdogan, "the only thing (Trump) said is that we would take a look at it," Sanders said Tuesday.

In Syria, the prospect of a U.S. withdrawal raises questions about whether ISIS will be given a chance to regroup in the country. Military leaders have warned ISIS, while pushed out of virtually all of its former strongholds, still poses a threat.

In September, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said the "fighting is ongoing. As we forecasted, it's been a tough fight, and we are winning."

Graham added in another tweet on Wednesday that "with all due respect, ISIS is not defeated in Syria, Iraq, and after just returning from visiting there — certainly not Afghanistan."

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## EUROPE

# Larger European mission possible for Navy

Official sees increased role for service to counter Russia's increased military activity in region

By JOHN VANDIVER  
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany

— The U.S. Navy will need to do more to counter Russia's increasing military activity, the service's number two civilian said Tuesday, a move that could increase the service's profile in a region where the Army and Air Force have stationed large forces for decades.

Given concerns about Russia's investments in its navy and especially its enhanced undersea capabilities, a larger Europe mission for the Navy is possible, Undersecretary of the Navy Thomas Modly said in Washington after returning from a weeklong overseas tour.

"We are going to have to do some things to meet that challenge," he said.

A recent decision to reactivate the Navy's 2nd Fleet, a move to better monitor increased Russian activity in the north Atlantic Ocean, is one way he said the service has adapted.

"My view is we wouldn't have done that if we didn't think that



PAUL MACAPAGAL/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

**Undersecretary of the Navy Thomas Modly, second from right, eats lunch with Marines assigned to the Marine Rotational Force-Europe in Vaernes, Norway, on Dec. 12.**

there was going to be a renewed emphasis in that area," Modly said. "How that is going to manifest itself (in Europe), I don't know. That is one of the things we are thinking about."

Modly swept through Norway and Romania to tout the service's mission in regions worried about

Russian aggression and eager for more frequent U.S. warship visits as a bulwark.

"I think more so than anything, they are just looking for a firm commitment that we are with them," Modly said.

In Europe, where the Army and Air Force operate several bases,

the Navy and Marines have been adding assets. In Norway, 700 Marines are now training year-round to boost their cold-weather fighting skills. And in Romania, a Navy missile defense mission is fully operational, with additional elements in Poland expected to be up and running next year.

The USS Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group also just wrapped up a Europe deployment, marking its first foray into the Arctic since the end of the Cold War.

Modly's European swing followed NATO's recent Trident Juncture exercise in Norway and comes amid provocative moves by Russia in both the Black Sea and Arctic.

On Tuesday, Moscow announced it will build up its military presence in the Arctic in 2019, adding air defense radar units and aviation guidance points. To the south, Russia's attack on Ukrainian naval ships in the Black Sea last month also has rattled allies in the region.

Romania, a country worried about Russian dominance of the Black Sea, plans to add new warships and submarines to its navy fleet. During his stop there, Modly said the Romanians were touting their modernization efforts.

"They are very serious about building their navy," he said.

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## NATION

# Senate to pass spending bill to avoid shutdown

## Act funds government through Feb. 8, denies wall money

BY ERICA WERNER, JOHN WAGNER  
AND DAMIAN PALETTA  
*The Washington Post*

WASHINGTON — The Senate prepared Wednesday to pass a short-term spending bill that would keep the government open through the New Year but deny President Trump the money he wanted for his border wall — a stark retreat for Republicans in their final days in control of Congress.

Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., announced the deal on the Senate floor Wednesday to extend government funding through Feb. 8, when Democrats will be in control of the House. Minority Leader Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., said Democrats would support it.

The outcome would temporarily break an impasse that threatened to shutter larger portions of the government this weekend and send hundreds of thousands of federal workers home without pay just before Christmas.

Trump has signaled his support for the plan but “can change his mind if he wants to,” said Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, the No. 2 Senate Republican. A senior White House aide, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss the administration’s position, said the plan is for Trump to sign the legislation McConnell is introducing.

That would represent a major defeat for Trump on his signature issue, the U.S.-Mexico border wall he long insisted Mexico would pay for but has demanded \$5 billion in taxpayer money to fund. And it’s an abandonment of his stance from a week ago, when he claimed he would be “proud” to shut down the government to get his wall money.

Trump has often changed his mind or threatened to veto bills at the last minute,

so a shutdown is still possible.

Trump continued to assert over Twitter on Wednesday that the wall would be built, insisting Mexico would pay for it via the renegotiated North America trade deal and that the military would build it.

The legality of such an approach is in question, and Schumer insisted Democrats would not let it happen. It’s also unclear how the trade deal would mean Mexico is paying for the wall.

McConnell blamed the outcome on Democrats after they turned down a GOP offer on Tuesday that would have provided \$1.6 billion for border barriers and another \$1 billion for Trump to spend on other immigration priorities.

“Faced with this intransigence — with Democrats’ failure to take our borders seriously — Republicans will continue to fulfill our duty to govern,” McConnell said. “That’s why we will soon take up a simple measure that will continue government funding into February: So we can continue this vital debate after the new Congress has convened.”

Schumer spoke on the floor shortly thereafter, saying: “I’m glad the leader thinks the government should not shut down over the president’s demands for a wall, and Democrats will support this CR.” A CR is a “continuing resolution” extending government funding.

The Senate could pass the measure as soon as Wednesday and the House by Thursday, marking a humbling end to the 115th Congress and two years of unified GOP control of Washington. About 25 percent of government funding would run out at the end of Friday absent action by Congress and Trump.

“One way or the other, we will win on the



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

**Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., center, joined from left by Sen. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., Sen. John Barrasso, R-Wyo., and Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., speaks at the Capitol in Washington on Tuesday. McConnell on Wednesday announced a deal to pass a short-term spending bill to keep the government open.**

Wall!” Trump said in a morning tweet. In another, he sought to make the case that because of “large scale criminal and drug inflow” the military would be justified in building a border wall.

Multiple budget experts said it would be illegal for Trump to take money from the Pentagon and redirect it toward the construction of a wall. At a minimum, such a change would require the approval of at least four congressional committees, two of which will be controlled by Democrats in two weeks.

“If Congress did not appropriate money to build a wall, you cannot just use other unrelated appropriations to do that,” said Todd Harrison, director of defense budget analysis at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Schumer said Democrats would not allow it to happen.

“Let me be very clear. The administration cannot reprogram funds appropriated by Congress for the full wall without our assent,” Schumer said in the Senate floor.

“To do so would violate Congress’ Article One powers. They cannot do it on their own and the House and Senate will not approve a wall from reprogrammed funds or anything else. It won’t happen.”

If Trump did order the military to build a wall anyway, Democrats or landowners could file a lawsuit and seek an immediate injunction to halt the construction. Trump has also not disclosed how he plans to deal with all the private property that runs along the border in Texas. If he orders the military to effectively seize that land through eminent domain it would open a host of additional legal issues.

Congress passed a spending bill for military programs that runs through September 2019, giving the White House even less flexibility in reappropriating existing funds. But White House officials have been scouring the budget rules for weeks and could try to combine a number of unrelated programs in a way that helps with the construction of a barrier. They haven’t specified how they would do that though.

# Trump eager to sign sweeping criminal justice legislation

BY KEVIN FREKING  
*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The Senate passed a sweeping criminal justice bill Tuesday that addresses concerns that the nation’s war on drugs had led to the imprisonment of too many Americans for non-violent crimes without adequately preparing them for their return to society.

Senate passage of the bill by a vote of 87-12 culminates years of negotiations and gives President Donald Trump a signature policy victory, with the outcome hailed by scores of conservative and liberal advocacy groups. The House is expected to pass the bill this week, sending it to the president’s desk for his signature.

The bill gives judges more discretion when sentencing some drug offenders and boosts prisoner rehabilitation efforts. It also reduces the life sentence for some drug offenders with three convictions, or “three strikes,” to 25 years. Another provision would allow about 2,600 federal prisoners sentenced for crack cocaine offenses before



SUSAN WALSH/AP

**Sen. Tim Scott, R-S.C., right, turns back to shake hands with Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa during a news conference on Capitol Hill Wednesday on prison reform legislation. They were joined on stage by Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., left, and Sen. Cory Booker, D-N.J., second from right.**

August 2010 the opportunity to petition for a reduced penalty.

“America is the greatest country in the world and my job is to fight for ALL citizens, even those

who have made mistakes,” Trump tweeted moments after the vote.

“That’s why we keep our communities safer, and provide hope and a second chance, to those who earn

it. In addition to everything else, billions of dollars will be saved. I look forward to signing this into law!” Trump added.

The vote also thrilled Democrats. Sen. Cory Booker, D-N.J., said the nation’s prisons are full of Americans who are struggling with mental illness and addiction, and who are overwhelmingly poor. He said the nation’s criminal justice system “feeds on certain communities and not on others,” and said the bill represents a step toward “healing” for those communities.

“Let’s make no mistake, this legislation, which is one small step, will affect thousands and thousands of lives,” Booker said.

When the bill appeared to have stalled in recent weeks, Sen. Charles Grassley, the Republican chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, pleaded with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to bring it up for a vote. With Trump’s urging, McConnell eventually agreed, and voted for the bill as well.

“The First Step Act takes les-

sons from history and from states — our laboratories of democracy — to reduce crime, save taxpayer dollars and strengthen faith and fairness in our criminal justice system,” Grassley said.

The bill would affect only federal prisoners, who make up less than 10 percent of the country’s prison population.

An array of liberal and conservative advocacy groups rallied in support of the bill. For example, the Koch brothers-backed group, Americans for Prosperity, applauded senators for putting “policy ahead of politics.” The American Civil Liberties Union said the bill was “by no means perfect. But we are in the midst of a mass incarceration crisis, and the time to act is now.”

Law enforcement groups were more split. It was backed by the Fraternal Order of Police and the International Association of Chiefs of Police but opposed by the National Sheriff’s Association. The union representing federal prison guards also joined in supporting the measure.

NATION

# Senate Dems see role in curbing harassment

By JULIE LINDERMAN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senate Democrats said in a report Wednesday that Congress should take an active role in addressing harassment and discrimination in the American workplace, and cited fear of retaliation as the leading cause for claims going unreported.

Among the recommendations are strengthening workers' rights to join unions and extending the statute of limitations to bring harassment claims. The report proposes expanding federal protections to include employees at small businesses, independent contractors and interns. It also suggests making clear that LGBTQ individuals are protected under federal civil rights laws.

The study comes about a year after Congress found itself squarely at the center of the #MeToo movement as more than a half-dozen lawmakers accused of sexual harassment were forced to resign. Revelations of sexual harassment and abuse at the hands of powerful men in media, business, entertainment and politics roiled those industries. But more attention needs to be paid to pervasive harassment and abuse of low-wage workers, who are particularly vulnerable and often feel unable to speak out.

"We've seen so many people bravely come forward and make clear that sexual assault and harassment in the workplace just has to stop," said Sen. Patty Murray of Washington state, the top Democrat on the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. Democratic aides on the committee spent nearly a year on the report interviewing people who alleged harassment or discrimination on the job.

Staff also consulted with poli-

cy experts, industry groups and unions. Republicans will continue to control the White House and the Senate come January, making the fate of congressional action on these issues unclear.

Over the past year, the number of sexual harassment cases

filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the federal agency tasked with enforcing civil rights laws regarding workplace discrimination, has increased significantly, and the agency's rate of filing lawsuits over such claims has risen

by 50 percent, according to the report. The report also reuests Congress to:

- Eliminate tipped minimum wage "to end workers' economic reliance on customers, which too often includes some customers who take advantage of the situa-

tion and harass workers."

- Prohibit nondisclosure agreements and mandatory arbitration clauses in employment contracts.

- Do more to ensure victims have access to resources and legal counsel.

## President orders federal closures on Christmas Eve

By MARTIN WEIL

The Washington Post

President Donald Trump issued an order Tuesday that closes all executive branch agencies of federal government on Christmas Eve.

The order reads: "all executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government shall be closed and their employees excused from duty on Monday, December 24, 2018, the day before Christmas Day."

The order stipulates that officials of various agencies and departments may determine that certain offices must remain open, with employees of those agencies required to work in cases of national security or defense or public need.

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## NATION

# Judge's criticism of Flynn upends sentencing

By ERIC TUCKER  
AND CHAD DAY  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A federal judge who described himself as disgusted by Michael Flynn's behavior upended a straightforward sentencing hearing, postponing punishment for President Donald Trump's first national security adviser and telling him in a stinging rebuke, "Arguably you sold your country out."

Lawyers for Flynn requested the delay Tuesday after a tongue-lashing from U.S. District Judge Emmet Sullivan raised the prospect that Flynn could spend time behind bars for lying to the FBI about his Russian contacts.

Prosecutors hadn't recommended prison, but the hearing that began with the defendant upbeat and smiling took an unexpected turn when the judge said his sentence would take into account not just Flynn's extensive cooperation with investigators but also the lies the Trump administration official told from the grounds of the White House.

"I can't make any guarantees, but I'm not hiding my disgust, my disdain for this criminal offense," Sullivan said.

The postponement gave Flynn a chance to continue cooperating with the government in hopes of staving off prison and proving his value as a witness, including in a foreign-lobbying prosecution



CAROLYN KASTER/AP

**President Donald Trump's former national security adviser Michael Flynn leaves federal court in Washington on Tuesday.**

brought this week. The possibility of prison had seemed remote for Flynn since prosecutors had praised his cooperation, including 19 meetings with investigators.

But the judge's upbraiding suggested otherwise and made clear that even defendants like Flynn who have cooperated in special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation may nonetheless be shadowed by the crimes

that brought them into court in the first place. The hearing upset what had been a carefully crafted agreement and pushed months into the future a resolution of one of Mueller's signature prosecutions.

"This is a very serious offense. A high-ranking senior official of the government making false statements to the Federal Bureau of Investigation while on the

physical premises of the White House," Sullivan said.

He later softened his tone, apologizing for suggesting that Flynn had worked as a foreign agent while in the White House when that other work had actually already ended. He also backpedaled on an earlier question on whether Flynn's transgressions amounted to treason, saying he didn't mean to suggest they did.

Flynn was to have been the first White House official sentenced in Mueller's investigation into possible coordination between the Trump presidential campaign and Russia.

The hearing, though incomplete, marked a remarkable fall after a three-decade military career that included tours in Iraq and Afghanistan and oversight of the Defense Intelligence Agency during the Obama administration. Though Flynn served only briefly in Trump's White House, he campaigned for him and attracted attention for leading a Republican National Convention crowd in a "Lock Her Up" chant about Hillary Clinton.

Flynn's legal woes stem from transition-period calls with then-Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak that raised intelligence community alarms even before Trump took office.

During those conversations, Flynn urged against a strong Russian response to Obama administration sanctions for Russian

election interference and encouraged Russia's opposition to a U.N. resolution on Israeli settlements. But when FBI agents approached him in the White House on Jan. 24, 2017, Flynn lied about those conversations, prosecutors said.

Flynn attorney Robert Kelner asked Sullivan not to penalize Flynn for the sentencing memo arguments, saying they were mostly intended to differentiate Flynn from other defendants in Mueller's investigation who'd received prison sentences for lying. Though Sullivan said none of the other defendants was a White House official, Kelner suggested none had been as cooperative.

"He made the decision publicly and clearly and completely and utterly to cooperate with this investigation, knowing that because of his high rank, that was going to send a signal to every other potential cooperator and witness in this investigation," he added.

After a prosecutor raised the prospect of Flynn's continued cooperation with other investigations in the future, Sullivan warned Flynn that he might not get full credit for his assistance to the government if he were sentenced as scheduled.

Sullivan gave a visibly shaken Flynn a chance to discuss delaying the hearing with his lawyers. The court briefly recessed.

When they returned, Kelner requested a postponement so that Flynn could keep cooperating.

## Ryan laments 'broken politics' in farewell

By ALAN FRAM  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Outgoing House Speaker Paul Ryan is be-coming America's "broken politics" in a farewell speech in which he calls Washington's failure to overhaul costly federal benefit programs "our greatest unfinished business."

"Our complex problems are solvable," Ryan says in excerpts of remarks he planned to deliver Wednesday at the Library of Congress, across the street from a Capitol where he's served two decades in the House. "That is to say, our problems are solvable if our politics will allow it."

The Wisconsin Republican's address, which touts achievements and admits shortcomings, comes as he closes his three-year run as speaker. Despite GOP control of the White House and Congress since early 2017, it's been an unusually tumultuous period dominated by the erratic decision-making and verbal outbursts of President Donald Trump and Republican divisions over top issues including health care and immigration.

Ryan's departure also comes six weeks after an Election Day that saw Democrats capture House

control. Their triumph followed a campaign in which they bloodied Republicans for trying to repeal and replace former President Barack Obama's popular health care law, a primary GOP priority.

Under Ryan, Congress approved the biggest tax cuts in decades, boosted defense spending and rolled back Obama regulations protecting clean air and water. But annual federal deficits are surging, Medicare and other expensive entitlement programs are growing and their attempt to scuttle Obama's health care statute crashed.

Providing chaotic background music to Ryan's departure, Congress in its closing days was mired in a struggle to avoid a partial government shutdown as Trump clashes with Democrats over his demand for taxpayer money to build a border wall with Mexico.

In excerpts provided to The Associated Press, Ryan calls the House "the most productive we have had in a generation."

"We have taken on some of the biggest challenges of our time, and made a great and lasting difference in the trajectory of this country," he said.

Yet his comments also underscore some of the GOP's recent failures.



SUSAN WALSH/AP

**Outgoing House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., planned to give his farewell address Wednesday at the Library of Congress.**

Ryan, 48, acknowledges he never achieved two longtime policy dreams — reining in spending by the government's huge entitlement programs and controlling the enormous and growing national debt. Thanks partly to the 10-year, \$1.5 trillion tax cut Republicans enacted last year, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates a record \$12.4 trillion accumulated federal deficits for the coming decade.

"I acknowledge plainly that my ambitions for entitlement reform have outpaced the political reality and I consider this our greatest unfinished business," he says.

## Official: N. Korea travel ban being reviewed

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — The Trump administration's special envoy for North Korea said Wednesday that Washington is reviewing easing its travel restrictions to North Korea to facilitate humanitarian shipments as part of efforts to resolve an impasse in nuclear diplomacy.

Stephen Biegun made the comments upon arrival in South Korea for talks on the nuclear negotiations, which have seen little headway since a summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in June, when they issued a vague vow for a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula without describing how or when it would occur.

Biegun said his discussions with South Korean officials will be about how to work together to engage with North Korea "in a manner that will help us move forward and move beyond the 70 years of hostility."

Toward that end, Biegun said he was directed by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to review America's policy on humanitarian assistance provided to North Korea.

"I understand that many humanitarian aid organizations, operating in the DPRK, are con-

cerned that strict enforcement of international sanctions has occasionally impeded the delivery of legitimate humanitarian assistance to the Korean people," Biegun said, referring to North Korea by its official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

He said he'll sit down with American aid groups early in the new year to discuss how the U.S. government can cement a "better" en-



Biegun

sure the delivery of appropriate assistance, particularly, through the course of the coming winter."

"We will also review American citizen travel to DPRK for purposes of facilitating the delivery of aid and ensuring the monitoring in line with international standards can occur," Biegun said. "I want to be clear — the United States and the United Nations will continue to closely review requests for exemptions and licenses for the delivery of assistance to the DPRK."

North Korea didn't immediately respond to Biegun's comments.

# NATION



ALEX BRANDON/AP

Karen Pence gives a tour of decorations inspired by "Twas the Night Before Christmas" at the Vice President's residence in Washington.

## 'Twas the Night before Christmas' at Pences'

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Christmas at Vice President Mike Pence's official residence literally jumps out of the pages of "Twas the Night Before Christmas."

Every room on the main floor of the Naval Observatory represents a verse from the poem by Clement Clarke Moore, officially titled "A Visit from St. Nicholas." Pence has a family tradition of reading the holiday classic to his three children every Christmas Eve even though they're adults now and the gang includes a daughter-in-law.

Stockings hung by the chimney with care? Nine red ones hang from the fireplace mantle in the

dining room: Six for the Pences and three for pets Hazel, Harley and Marlon. Instead of visions of sugar plums dancing in their heads, kids can stop by a special candy station to fill up on them.

The main attraction shines in the living room: an 11½-foot North Carolina fir decorated with ornaments symbolizing the "bundle of toys" Santa "had flung on his back." A life-size Santa replica stands next to the tree, reviewing his naughty or nice list.

Guests arrive to an oversized copy of the poem opened beside a high-backed red velvet chair.

Pence's wife, Karen, recently gave The Associated Press an exclusive tour of their holiday decorations.

# Administration moves to ban bump stocks; gun groups balk

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration Tuesday banned bump stocks, the firearm attachments that allow semi-automatic weapons to fire like machine guns and were used during the 2017 Las Vegas shooting that killed 58 people.

The regulation gives gun owners until late March to turn in or destroy the devices. After that, it will be illegal to possess them under the same federal laws that prohibit machine guns.

The regulation became a focal point of the gun control debate after they were used in October 2017 when a man opened fire from his hotel suite into a crowd at a country music concert, killing 58 and injuring hundreds.

The regulation was signed Tuesday by Acting Attorney General Matthew Whitaker. It will take effect 90 days after it is published in the Federal Register, which is expected to happen Friday.

Bump stock owners will be required to either destroy them or surrender them to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, a senior Justice Department official said. It is impossible to know just how many bump stocks Americans own because the devices aren't traceable, but ATF has estimated that between 280,000 and about 520,000 have been sold since 2010.

Investigators expect most owners will comply with the new rule and ATF will take action against those who don't, the official said. But there's no surefire way to know whether owners are complying. The official briefed reporters on condition of anonymity.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said President Donald Trump was "once again fulfilling a promise he made to the American people." Trump had promised the ban in March, saying the devices "turn legal weapons into illegal machines."

Shortly afterward, the Justice Department started the process of amending firearms regulations to define bump stocks as machine guns. ATF received about 186,000 comments on the proposal.

The amended regulations reverse a 2010 ATF decision that found bump stocks did not amount to machine guns and could not be regulated unless Congress changed existing firearms law or passed a new one. In the aftermath of the Las Vegas shooting, some members of Con-

gress sought to ban bump stocks, but no legislation was passed. At least 10 states have sought their own restrictions.

The amended rule was met almost immediately with resistance from gun rights advocates, including Gun Owners of America, which said it would file a lawsuit against the Justice Department and ATF to protect gun owners from "unconstitutional regulations."

"These regulations implicate Second Amendment rights, and courts should be highly suspect when an agency changes its 'interpretation' of a statute in order to impair the exercise of enumerated constitutional rights," the organization's executive director, Erich Pratt, said.

The National Rifle Association called on the Justice Department to provide amnesty for those who already have bump stocks.

Police said the gunman in the Las Vegas massacre, Stephen Paddock, fired for more than 10 minutes using multiple weapons outfitted with target scopes and bump stocks.

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## NATION

# Nev. first state with female-majority chambers

By MICHELLE L. PRICE  
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Nevada became the first state in the U.S. with an overall female majority in the Legislature on Tuesday when county officials in Las Vegas appointed two women to fill vacancies in the state Assembly.

The appointments of Democrats Rochelle Thuy Nguyen and Beatrice “Bea” Angela Duran to two Las Vegas-area legislative seats give women 51 percent of the 63 seats in the Legislature.

Women will hold nine of 21 seats in the state Senate, falling short of a majority in that chamber. But they will hold 23 of 42 seats in the Assembly, comprising 55 percent in that chamber and giving women enough numbers to make the two chambers an overall female majority.

No state has previously had a female-majority or even a 50 percent-female Legislature, according to the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University, which tracks women’s political representation.

Women picked up seats in the Nevada Assembly and Senate during the 2018 November elec-



PHOTOS BY JOHN LOCHER/AP

**Left:** Beatrice “Bea” Angela Duran works in her office at the Culinary Union on Tuesday in Las Vegas. **Right:** Rochelle Thuy Nguyen greets her daughter Hannah Lay at their home. Nevada became the first state in the U.S. with an overall female majority in the Legislature on Tuesday when county officials in Las Vegas appointed Duran and Nguyen to fill vacancies in the state Assembly.

tion but fell short of an overall majority. Vacancies created by lawmakers who won election to other offices in November, along with one sitting female lawmaker then allowed women to gain additional

seats.

With the 2018 election, women cracked the 50 percent threshold in the Nevada state Assembly and Colorado State House, but no overall majority was reached



until the Nevada appointments.

“It is unprecedented at this point to see a majority female legislature overall,” said Kelly Dittmar, an assistant professor of political science at Rutgers-Camden.

With the two Nevada appointments, women will make up 28.6 percent of state legislators nationwide when new legislators are sworn into office in 2019, according to data from the Center for American Women and Politics.

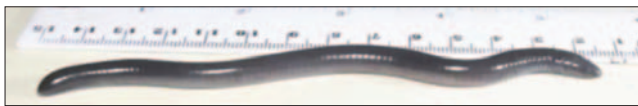
Women made up 24.3 percent of state legislators in the U.S. a decade ago, the center said.

Studies of women who have served in Congress are probably comparable to female gains in state legislatures, she said, and the studies have found that “the more women you have in the body, the more that their perspectives and life experiences are integrated into policy debates and deliberations.”

Dittmar said the milestone in Nevada could help change attitudes of what a state Legislature should like.

“That might influence young people. It might influence other women to see that body as both friendly to them as well as more responsive to their concerns,” she said.

Nguyen, an attorney, and Duran, a grievance specialist with the state’s casino workers union, will hold their seats until the next general election in 2020.



From The Washington Post

A new worm-like amphibian species that burrows underground has been named after Donald Trump.

## Worm-like species named after Trump

By ISAAC STANLEY-BECKER  
The Washington Post

When President Donald Trump announced his plan to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement last year, he said he was benching the United States in the global fight against climate change because he wanted the rest of the world to stop “laughing at us.” “We don’t want other leaders and other countries laughing at us anymore, and they won’t be,” Trump vowed from a podium in the White House Rose Garden in June 2017. “They won’t be.”

But the name of a new amphibian species reveals just how hearty a laugh critics of the president abroad are having at his expense — and on the very issue where he promised to protect American dignity.

A London-based sustainable building materials company, EnviroBuild, saw a resemblance between the serpentine creature, which is nearly blind and burrows underground, and Trump, who has called the evidence of global warming a “hoax.” EnviroBuild, which paid \$25,000 for the naming rights at an auction this month, said Tuesday that it had chosen “Dermophis donaldtrumpi” in recognition of the president’s position on climate change.

The symbolism invoked by the British company has a more serious message. It is meant to call attention to the dire, real-world consequences of Trump’s refusal to recognize environmental catastrophe, while scientists say could arrive as early as 2040.

“Realizing the similarities between the amazing but unknown creature and the leader of the free world, we couldn’t resist buying the rights in your president’s honor,” Aidan Bell, EnviroBuild’s co-founder told The Washington Post. The firm added a mop of blonde hair to an image of an amphibian in the same family as the snake- or wormlike species to emphasize the visual likeness.

As an amphibian, the company noted in a news release, the *Dermophis donaldtrumpi* is especially vulnerable to the harmful effects of climate change and is “therefore in danger of becoming extinct as a direct result of its namesake’s climate policies.”

The naming rights went up for sale Dec. 8 at a “Species Legacy Auction” sponsored by Rainforest Trust, a Virginia-based conservation nonprofit that called the event “the largest species-naming auction in history.”

EnviroBuild acknowledged that the authority to name a new species is typically reserved for biologists. Bell noted that the title would have to undergo peer review, according to standards governing zoological nomenclature.

The *Dermophis donaldtrumpi* measures nearly four inches in length. It belongs to a group of limbless amphibians called caecilians. Rainforest Trust said the remittance for the naming rights will go to protecting the creature’s home in Panama, where it was recently discovered by scientists.

The *Dermophis donaldtrumpi* is not alone among creatures bearing Trump’s name. “The Demorphus donaldtrumpi dubbed a blonde-haired moth in the *Journal Zookybes* dubbed a blonde-haired moth in the *Neopalpa donaldtrumpi*.”

“The new species is named in honor of Donald J. Trump, to be installed as the 45th President of the United States on January 20, 2017,” wrote the author, Vazrick Nazari, an evolutionary biologist in Ottawa. “The reason for this choice of name is to bring wider public attention to the need to continue protecting fragile habitats in the US that still contain many undescribed species.”

He also offered this specific rationale for the label: “The specific epithet is selected because of the resemblance of the scales on the frons (head) of the moth to Mr. Trump’s hairstyle.”

## Ex-head of DEA post in Colombia cleared in misconduct probe

By JOSHUA GOODMAN  
AND JIM MUSTIAN  
Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia — The former head of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration’s high-profile office in Colombia has been cleared of wrongdoing following a probe of misconduct allegations, including accusations that he used government resources to hire prostitutes.

A DEA letter addressed to Richard Dobrich said the investigation turned up “no evidence to support this allegation” and was being closed.

Dobrich provided a copy of the Dec. 7-dated letter, which was signed by Preston Grubbs, the deputy head of the DEA, to The Associated Press. DEA spokeswoman Mary Brandenberg confirmed he had been cleared but declined further comment.

The Justice Department’s Office of Inspector General had launched a probe into Dobrich, then the DEA’s top-ranking official in South America, after receiving an anonymous complaint alleging he directed Colombian drivers working for the U.S. Embassy in Bogota “to procure sex workers,” according to a copy of the complaint obtained by the AP.

Dobrich, a former Navy SEAL who was injured during a firefight with the Taliban during a counter-narcotics raid in Afghanistan in 2010, called the allegation an

attempt at “character assassination,” possibly by a disgruntled former DEA employee.

“I never dishonored the oath that I took and still care deeply about the DEA’s mission and the people who work very hard to tackle serious issues,” he said in an interview Monday, adding that he had filed a complaint with Colombian police that may allow them to uncover the author’s identity.

He also expressed frustration that the anonymous complaint and word of the probe ever got out, saying it had caused harm to his family and reputation, and said DEA leadership should have done more to stand by him in the face of what he called an “obviously laughable accusation.”

Dobrich said he has filed a grievance with the Justice Department, alleging undue delays in closing the case and clearing his name.

Dobrich’s tenure as the top DEA executive in Colombia began in 2015, when he was brought in to restore order after a blistering Inspector General’s report found several DEA agents had participated in “sex parties” with prostitutes hired by Colombian cartels.

Dobrich, 54, retired from the DEA in October after a nearly three-decade career to take a private sector job.

Prior to Bogota, he oversaw the DEA’s military-style FAST teams that battled drug traffickers in Afghanistan and Latin America.



# NATION



SETH PERLMAN/AP

School buses in Springfield, Ill. Child abuse increases the day after school report cards are released — but only when kids get their grades on a Friday, a Florida study released on Monday suggests.

## Study: Report-card Fridays lead to more incidents of child abuse

By LINDSEY TANNER  
Associated Press

Child abuse increases the day after school report cards are released — but only when kids get their grades on a Friday, a study in Florida suggests.

The curious finding startled researchers, who had figured abuse might go up regardless of the specific day kids got their grades.

But their study of reports to a child abuse hotline that included broken bones, burns and other confirmed abuse found otherwise.

An increase only occurred on Saturdays after a report-card Friday. Though overall rates were small, there were almost four times more cases on those Saturdays than on other Saturdays.

No apparent connection between report cards and abuse was found on other days of the week.

“Anecdotally, we know a lot of parents will spank their children or use corporal punishment if they’re unsatisfied with their school work,” said University of Florida psychologist Melissa Bright, the lead author.

That punishment may become abusive when kids don’t have school the next day and parents think injuries might be more likely to go unnoticed, the researchers said, noting that teachers are required to report suspected child abuse. Or, it could be that severe punishment is less likely on weekdays when parents are too busy to focus on report cards, Bright said.

But she acknowledged those theories are speculation and that the findings aren’t proof.

The study was published Monday in JAMA Pediatrics.

The researchers reviewed calls to a Florida child abuse hotline and school report card release

**‘Anecdotally, we know a lot of parents will spank their children or use corporal punishment if they’re unsatisfied with their school work.’**

Melissa Bright  
University of Florida psychologist

dates in most of Florida’s 67 counties during the 2015-16 academic year.

Nearly 2,000 cases of physical abuse in kids ages 5 to 11, confirmed by child welfare authorities, were included.

There was an average of slightly more than 0.6 cases of abuse per 100,000 children on Saturdays after a report-card Friday compared with slightly less than 0.2 cases per 100,000 children on other Saturdays.

The average was less than one per day because so many days were included in the analysis. But in a state like Florida, with a school-age population of just over 3 million kids, this could amount to 19 cases of report-card-related abuse compared to 5 on other Saturdays, the researchers said.

Outside experts noted study limitations, including no evidence that kids who were abused had received poor grades and no information on when parents first learned of kids’ grades. But they said the study was useful for highlighting that child abuse and corporal punishment are still too common even though rates have declined since the 1990s.

Rates were 9 per 1,000 U.S. kids in 2016 compared with 13 per 1,000 in 1990.

Dr. Robert Sege, a Boston pediatrician and Tufts University professor of medicine, said bad grades should be a time for parents to find out what’s causing their children’s struggles. “There’s no place for corporal punishment for school failure because it doesn’t work and misses the point.”

Sege is lead author of an American Academy of Pediatrics policy update released last month that recommends against corporal punishment and spanking.

An editorial published with study said the United States deserves a C-minus “for effective discipline strategies.”



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## Bankrupt scouts?

Claims could lead Boy Scouts to Chapter 11

By DUNE LAWRENCE  
Bloomberg

It took Robb Lawson until he was 45 to finally confront a dark memory from his days as a Boy Scout.

Lawson was a teenager at the time, a member of a troop in Georgia, picked to attend a wilderness challenge to win entry in the Scouts’ prestigious Order of the Arrow. He recalls that he wasn’t feeling well, and a trip leader took him to a tent and raped him.

The lawsuit he filed against the Boy Scouts of America in 2016 represented a personal turning point for Lawson. For the Boy Scouts, his story reflects the nationwide scandal and financial stakes that have pushed the 108-year-old organization to consider filing for bankruptcy.

Last week, Chief Scout Executive Michael Surbaugh acknowledged media reports that the group was considering Chapter 11 protection, saying it’s “exploring all options available” to ensure that scouting programs continue uninterrupted. Nothing’s been decided, said Boy Scouts spokeswoman Effie Delimarkos in an email. “It’s due diligence for an organization whose motto is ‘be prepared’ to explore all of our opportunities and pathways forward.”

The Scouts are fighting hundreds of claims, a rash of litigation fueled by the public emergence in 2012 of the organization’s own meticulous records of thousands of sexual abuse and misconduct allegations. BSA executives say the documents — known as the “ineligible volunteer files” — were part of their system for protecting kids by weeding out those who shouldn’t have been allowed to work with them.

Plaintiffs and their lawyers call it something else: evidence of a massive cover-up that endangered other children and, in



TONY GUTIERREZ/AP

**The Boy Scouts of America says it is exploring “all options” to address serious financial challenges because of sexual-abuse claims.**

the words of Lawson’s suit, “put scouting’s image and financial interests — its ‘brand’ — ahead of the safety of the scouts.”

Already under pressure from declining enrollment, the Scouts have worked to minimize the financial impact of sex abuse litigation. The group has paid more than \$11 million to the law firm leading its legal defense and has doubled its level of insurance reserves since the records were made public. The group has also raised dues and, in the interest of reaching a new audience, opened its programming to girls starting next year, when the traditional scouting program will be re-named Scouts BSA.



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## NATION

# Lawmakers seek probe on death of Guatemalan girl

Associated Press

LORDSBURG, N.M. — Lawmakers visiting the Border Patrol station where a 7-year-old Guatemalan girl was taken hours before her death demanded an independent investigation Tuesday into the response by federal agents.

"There are things that we need to learn," said U.S. Rep. Raul Ruiz, a California Democrat who was part of the delegation visiting the Border Patrol station in Lordsburg, N.M.

Ruiz, a doctor, questioned why border agents didn't call for an immediate airlift of Jakelin Caal after her father told an agent she was sick and vomiting.

A bus carrying the child and her father left the Antelope Wells port of entry for the Lordsburg

station, roughly 90 minutes away. By then, according to a Customs and Border Protection statement, Jakelin's temperature had reached 105.7 degrees Fahrenheit. Emergency medical technicians had to revive her. She was then airlifted to an El Paso, Texas, hospital, where she died the next day.

The girl and her father were traveling with a group of 163 people when they arrived at the border. U.S. government officials say Jakelin had not had anything to eat or drink for days, which lawyers for her family have disputed.

Members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus visited both the port of entry and the Lordsburg station.



RUDY GUTIERREZ, THE EL PASO TIMES/AP

**Annunciation House director Ruben Garcia answers questions from the media after reading a statement from the family of Jakelin Caal Maquin, pictured at left, during a press briefing Saturday in El Paso, Texas. She died in a Texas hospital two days after being taken into custody by U.S. Border Patrol agents in a remote stretch of New Mexico desert.**

## Mass migrant influx at crossing baffles officials

By ELLIOTT SPAGAT AND COLLEEN LONG  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Large numbers of Guatemalan families and unaccompanied children are surrendering to U.S. immigration agents in an extremely remote and dangerous stretch of New Mexico desert, a new smuggling route that has baffled authorities.

It is where Jakelin Caal, 7, and her father were found Dec. 6 with 161 others near a border crossing in Antelope Wells. Jakelin started vomiting on the bus ride to the nearest Border Patrol station 94 miles away and had stopped breathing by the time she arrived. She died at a hospital in El Paso, Texas.

U.S. authorities this week encountered groups of 257 and 239 people consisting of families and unaccompanied children,

**‘This is a brand-new phenomenon. It’s really challenging our resources.’**

Kevin McAleenan

Customs and Border Protection Commissioner

Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Kevin McAleenan said Tuesday. The Border Patrol found groups of more than 100 people along the entire U.S. border with Mexico about eight times during the budget year that ended Sept. 30 and encountered nearly four times that amount since Oct. 1.

"This is a brand-new phenomenon," McAleenan told reporters in a conference call. "It's really challenging our resources."

Antelope Wells is the site of one of about three dozen Border Patrol "forward operating bases" in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas — bare-bones facilities designed to increase enforcement in remote areas. About four agents are assigned to Antelope Wells and they sleep at the base on eight-day shifts to avoid having to drive home every day.

Migrants have told agents that they took commercial buses from Guatemala to New Mexico in four or five days straight, a sharp

contrast to the traditional route that can take 25 to 30 days to reach the U.S. border and includes rest stops at "stash houses" along the way, McAleenan said.

It's unclear why Guatemalans are choosing such a remote spot, but McAleenan said it may be less expensive for smugglers to pay other criminal organizations fees to pass through. The U.S. is working with Mexico to determine the reasons behind it, hoping to redirect traffic to the nearest cities, El Paso and Nogales, Ariz.

Families began arriving in large groups about once or twice a week since mid-October and the trend has accelerated in recent weeks, McAleenan said.

The families are generally seeking out U.S. agents to turn themselves in, raising questions about why they would go to such lengths when they could do so in large cities.



COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS/AP

**Ali Hassan with his dying 2-year-old son Abdullah in a Sacramento hospital. The boy's Yemeni mother, blocked by the Trump administration's travel ban, has won her fight for a waiver that would allow her to travel to California to see her son.**

## Yemeni mom wins fight to see dying son

By JULIE WATSON

Associated Press

All Shaima Swileh wants is to give her son one more kiss before he dies.

The Yemeni woman is about to get her wish after winning her fight for a waiver from the Trump administration's travel ban so she can fly to California where her 2-year-old son is on life support.

The State Department granted Swileh the waiver on Tuesday after lawyers with the Council on American-Islamic Relations sued this week, ending a yearlong battle for the family. Swileh was planning to fly to San Francisco on Wednesday to see Abdullah at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital in Oakland.

"This will allow us to mourn with dignity," the boy's father, Ali Hassan, said in a statement provided by the Sacramento chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations.

Hassan, who is a U.S. citizen and lives in Stockton, brought Abdullah to California in the fall to get treatment for a genetic brain disorder.

"My wife is calling me every day wanting to kiss and hold her son for the one last time," Hassan said, choking up as he made a public plea at a news conference Monday, a day before the government granted the visa.

The couple moved to Egypt after marrying in war-torn Yemen in 2016 and had been trying to get a visa for Swileh since 2017 so they

could all move to California. Citizens from Yemen and four other mostly Muslim countries, along with North Korea and Venezuela, are restricted from coming to the United States under the travel ban enacted under President Donald Trump.

When the boy's health worsened, the father decided to go ahead to California in October to get their son help.

As Swileh and her husband fought for a waiver, doctors put Abdullah on life support.

After getting electronic responses, Hassan started losing hope and was considering pulling his son off life support to end his suffering. But then a hospital social worker reached out to the council, which sued Monday.

## NATION

# Surgeon general: Vaping puts teens at risk

By MATTHEW PERRONE  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The government's top doctor is taking aim at the best-selling electronic cigarette brand in the U.S., urging swift action to prevent Juul and similar vaping brands from addicting millions of teenagers.

In an advisory Tuesday, Surgeon General Jerome Adams said parents, teachers, health professionals and government officials must take "aggressive steps" to keep children from using e-cigarettes. Federal law bars the sale of e-cigarettes to those under 18. For young people, "nicotine is dangerous and it can have negative health effects," Adams said in an interview. "It can impact learning, attention and memory, and it can prime the youth brain for addiction."

Federal officials are scrambling to reverse a recent explosion

in teen vaping that public health officials fear could undermine decades of declines in tobacco use. An estimated 3.6 million U.S. teens are now using e-cigarettes, representing 1 in 5 high school students, according to the latest federal figures.

Separate survey results released Monday showed twice as many high school students used e-cigarettes this year compared to last year.

E-cigarettes and other vaping devices have been sold in the U.S. since 2007, growing into a \$6.6 billion business. Most devices heat a flavored nicotine solution into an inhalable vapor.

They have been pitched to adult smokers as a less-harmful alternative to cigarettes, though there's been little research on or whether they help people quit. Even more worrisome, a growing body of research suggests that

teens who vape are more likely to try regular cigarettes.

Adams singled out Silicon Valley startup Juul. The company leapfrogged over its larger competitors with online promotions portraying their small device as the latest high-tech gadget.

The surgeon general's advisory notes that each Juul cartridge, or pod, contains as much nicotine as a pack of cigarettes.

Additionally, Adams states that Juul's liquid nicotine mixture is specially formulated to give a smoother, more potent nicotine buzz. That effect poses special risks for young people, Adams says.

"We do know that these newer products, such as Juul, can promote dependence in just a few uses," Adams said.

Juul said in a statement that it shares the surgeon general's goal: "We are committed to preventing youth access of Juul products."



STEVEN SENNE/AP

**A Massachusetts high school principal displays vaping devices in April that had been confiscated from students. The U.S. surgeon general says swift action is needed to prevent millions of teenagers and adolescents from becoming hooked on Juul and other high-nicotine electronic cigarettes.**



Jon Elswick/AP

**Some of the Facebook and Instagram ads linked to a Russian effort to disrupt the American political process and stir up tensions around divisive social issues, released by members of the U.S. House Intelligence committee.**

## Social media firms face tough fight against trolls

By BARBARA ORTUTAY  
Associated Press

NEW YORK — It's a high-stakes game of whack-a-mole with no end in sight.

Social media companies are fighting an expensive and increasingly complex battle against Russian trolls who are using catchy memes, bots and fake accounts to influence elections and sow discord in the U.S. and beyond.

This week, two reports released by the Senate Intelligence Committee gave strong evidence that Moscow's sweeping online disinformation campaign was more far-reaching than originally thought, with agents working to divide Americans by race, religion and ideology and erode trust in U.S. institutions.

It is also clear that the culprits are learning from one another and quickly adapting to sophisticated countermeasures taken

against them.

When it comes to election meddling, much of the focus for the past two years has been on the biggest internet platforms, especially Facebook, where agents in Russia (as well as Iran and elsewhere) have used phony accounts to spread fake news and divisive messages.

But the latest reports offer more proof that the Russians went beyond the social media giant, taking advantage of smaller services like Pinterest, Reddit, music apps and even the mobile game Pokemon Go. Instagram, Facebook's photo-sharing app, was also found to have played a far bigger role than previously understood.

In many ways, the Russian operation works like a corporate branding campaign, except in this case, the goal is not to sell running shoes but to sway elections. On Facebook, agents might post links to fake news articles, or slogans pitting immi-

grants against veterans or liberals against conservatives.

Many of the posts and memes were not incendiary and didn't contain anything that could get them promptly banned from social networks for violating their standards against hate speech or nudity, for example. Instead, they looked like the ordinary sorts of things regular people might share on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

Caught off guard by Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. elections, giants like Facebook, Google and Twitter have thrown millions of dollars, tens of thousands of people and what they say are their best technical efforts into fighting fake news, propaganda and hate.

They are using artificial intelligence to root out fake accounts or to identify bots that post divisive content.

Of course, malicious actors are learning to sidestep these countermeasures.

## Court halts NY ban on nunchucks

By DEEPTI HAJELA  
Associated Press

NEW YORK — A 1974 New York state ban on nunchucks that was put into place over fears that youth inspired by martial arts movies would create widespread mayhem is unconstitutional under the Second Amendment, a federal court has ruled.

Judge Pamela Chen issued her ruling Friday in a Brooklyn federal court on the martial arts weapon made famous by Bruce Lee.

The plaintiff, James Maloney, started his legal quest after being charged with possession of nunchucks in his home in 2000. He initially filed a complaint in 2003, and appealed all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court when the case went against him. The Supreme Court in 2010 remanded the case back down to be reconsidered in light of a Second Amendment decision it had made in another case, and Maloney filed an amended complaint later that year.

Maloney had been focused on getting the part of the law overturned that banned nunchucks, two rigid rods connected at one end by a chain or rope, even in private homes.

In her ruling, Chen said the court couldn't simply take that part out, and ruled that the state's law as it pertained to possessing nunchucks as well as to manufacturing, transporting or disposing of them was in violation of the Second Amendment.

Maloney, a professor at the State University of New York's Maritime College, said some of his motivation was outrage. "How could a state simply ban any and all possession of a weapon that had a long and proud history as a martial-arts weapon, with recreational, therapeutic and self-defense utility," he said.

Maloney also wanted to teach a form of martial art using nunchucks that he created, which he calls "Shafan Ha Lavan" to his sons, the ruling said.



## NATION

# Elon Musk unveils first 'loop' tunnel for cars

By AMANDA LEE MYERS

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Elon Musk unveiled his underground transportation tunnel on Tuesday, allowing reporters and invited guests to take some of the first rides in the revolutionary albeit bumpy subterranean tube — the tech entrepreneur's answer to what he calls "soul-destroying traffic."

Guests boarded Musk's Tesla Model S and rode along Los Angeles-area surface streets about a mile away to what's known as O'Leary Station. The station, smack dab in the middle of a residential neighborhood — "basically in someone's backyard," Musk says — consists of a wall-less elevator that slowly took the car down a wide shaft, roughly 30 feet below the surface.

The sky slowly fell away and the surprisingly narrow tunnel emerged.

"We're clear," said the driver, who sped up and zipped into the tunnel when a red track light turned green, making the tube look like something from space or a dance club.

The car jostled significantly during the ride, which was bumpy enough to give one reporter motion sickness while another yelled, "Wo!"

Musk described his first ride as "epic." "For me it was a eureka moment," he told a room full of reporters. "I was like, 'This thing is going to damn well work.'"

He said the rides are bumpy now because "we kind of ran out of time" and there were some problems with the speed of his paving machine.

"It'll be smooth as glass," he said of future systems. "This is just a prototype. That's why it's a little rough around the edges."

Later in the day, Musk emerged from the tunnel himself inside one of his cars. He high-fived guests and pumped his fists in the air before delivering a speech in the green glow of the tunnel about the technology and why it's so important.

"Traffic is soul-destroying. It's like a load on the soul," he said to guests who snacked on marshmallow treats and hot dogs and hoped for a turn in the tunnel.



ROBYN BECK/AP

**Elon Musk, co-founder and chief executive officer of Tesla Inc., arrives in a modified Tesla Model X electric vehicle during an unveiling event for The Boring Company Hawthorne test tunnel in Hawthorne, Calif., on Tuesday.**

On Tuesday, he explained for the first time in detail how the system, which he simply calls "loop," could work on a larger scale beneath cities across the globe. Autonomous, electric vehicles could be lowered into the system on wall-less elevators, which could be placed almost anywhere cars can go. The cars would have to be fitted with specially designed side wheels that pop out perpendicular to the car's regular tires and run along the tunnel's track. The cost for such wheels would be about \$200 or \$300 a car, Musk said.

A number of autonomous cars would remain inside the tunnel system just for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Once on the main arteries of the system, every car could run at top speed except when entering and exiting.

"It's much more like an underground

highway than it is a subway," Musk said.

The cars would have to be autonomous to work in the system but not Teslas specifically, and they would have to be electric because of the fumes from gas, Musk said.

The demo rides were considerably slower — 40 mph — than what Musk says the future system will run at: 150 mph. Still, it took only three minutes to go just over a mile from the beginning to the end of the tunnel, the same amount of time it took to accomplish a right-hand turn out of the parking lot and onto a surface street even before the height of Los Angeles' notorious rush-hour traffic.

Tuesday's reveal comes almost two years to the day since Musk announced on Twitter that "traffic is driving me nuts" and he was "going to build a tunnel boring machine and just start digging."

"I am actually going to do this," he added in response to initial skepticism. Soon after, he began The Boring Company, tongue in cheek intentional.

For the privately funded test tunnel, Musk acquired a tunnel-boring machine that had been used in a San Francisco Bay Area project and put it down a shaft in a parking lot at the SpaceX headquarters.

Musk dismissed concerns such as the noise and disruption of building the tunnels, saying that when workers bored through the end of the test tunnel the people in the home 20 feet away "didn't even stop watching TV."

"The footsteps of someone walking past your house will be more noticeable than a tunnel being dug under your house," he said.

The Boring Company canceled its plans for another test tunnel on Los Angeles' west side last month after a neighborhood coalition filed a lawsuit expressing concerns about traffic and disruptions from trucks hauling out dirt during the boring process.

However, Steve Davis, head of The Boring Company, said the interest in the tunnel systems has been significant — anywhere from five to 20 calls a week from various municipalities and stakeholders.

One project Musk is planning on, known as the Dugout Loop, would take Los Angeles baseball fans to Dodger Stadium from one of three subway stations. Another would take travelers from downtown Chicago to O'Hare International Airport. Both projects are in the environmental review phase.

Musk said he thinks the Chicago project has the most potential to open soonest and that he's hoping an extensive network opens in Los Angeles before the city hosts the 2028 Olympics.

"Wouldn't it be incredible if you could travel around L.A., New York, D.C., Chicago, Paris, London — anywhere — at 150 mph?" Musk said. "That'd be phenomenal."

## Grocery chain begins making deliveries with driverless vehicles

By CATHY BUSSEWITZ

Associated Press

The nation's largest grocery chain stepped into the driverless delivery market Tuesday, bringing milk, eggs and other items to a customer's home in a vehicle with nobody at the wheel.

Although limited to delivering within about a mile of one Arizona supermarket owned by Kroger Co., it represents the latest step for industries trying to lower delivery costs of everyday items and those trying to launch self-driving cars on public roads.

Tuesday's delivery arrived at Shannon Baggett's house in the Phoenix suburb of Scottsdale. She was already receiving groceries weekly from larger, manned self-driving vehicles that the company Nuro developed and launched in August. She said it was surreal to see nobody in the car bringing her milk, eggs and strawberries.

"It was very cool to see it pull up. It was a lot smaller than I thought it would be," Baggett

said. "I told my husband, 'We just got our groceries delivered by a robot.'"

But Tuesday's launch also highlighted some of the many challenges still ahead for autonomous vehicles: One of the compact cars didn't drive as planned at a media demonstration because of a dead battery and had to be pushed up a ramp and onto a truck by several men.

Kroger and Nuro, which is based in Mountain View, Calif., announced Tuesday that they would deliver groceries in the Scottsdale area, using an autonomous vehicle called the R1, which has no steering wheel and no seats for people.

Nuro will be adding two of its completely unmanned R1 vehicles to its fleet of manned self-driving vehicles that deliver groceries, said Dave Ferguson, president and co-founder of Nuro.

When summoned, the R1 will travel within a 1-mile radius of the Fry's Food store just east of

the Phoenix Zoo at speeds up to 25 miles per hour on residential roads but stay clear of main roads or highways, according to Pam Giannonatti, corporate affairs manager at Cincinnati-based Kroger's Fry's division.

Customers place an order on their smartphone or laptop and get a text message when the groceries are on their way. Another message will alert them when the delivery is curbside. Once the vehicle arrives, the customer will receive a code to punch in to open the doors, Giannonatti said.

Customers will pay a flat fee of \$5.95 and can request same-day or next-day delivery.

The unmanned delivery vehicles will be followed by a "shadow car," driven by a person with the ability to stop or control it. This car is being used in the early stages of the program out of caution and will be phased out, Ferguson said.

"This is not yet at the point where in any way it's economi-



BRIAN SKOLOFF/AP

**An autonomous vehicle called an R1 created to deliver groceries is displayed outside a Fry's grocery store, which is owned by Kroger Co., in Scottsdale, Ariz., on Tuesday.**

cally better than just sending someone out in a car to deliver your groceries," said Bryant Walker Smith, a professor at the University of South Carolina, who teaches about emerging technologies. "It will probably cost much more, and the range is minimal,

and there are lots of ways it would not be a true, commercial-scale, viable deployment, but it's an important step on that path."

Technological hurdles and apprehension have limited attempts to deploy fully autonomous vehicles on public streets.

## WORLD

# Britain to unveil its post-Brexit immigration plan

By JILL LAWLESS  
Associated Press

LONDON — With 100 days until Britain leaves the European Union, the government was publishing long-awaited plans Wednesday for a post-Brexit immigration system that will end free movement of EU citizens to the U.K.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said the proposals — Britain's biggest immigration changes in more than 40 years — would create a "skills-based immigration system built around the talent and expertise people can bring, rather than where they come from."

At present, all EU nationals can live and work in Britain under the bloc's free-movement rules, but that will end after the U.K. leaves in March. The government says that once a post-Brexit transition period ends, the same rules will apply to all immigrants regard-

less of where they come from.

The government is proposing no limit on the number of well-paid, skilled immigrants who can settle in Britain, but curbs on "low-skilled" workers.

The rules will not apply to more than 3 million EU citizens currently living in Britain. The government has said they can stay, even if the U.K. leaves the bloc without an agreement on future relations.

Immigration was a major factor behind Britain's 2016 vote to leave the U.K. and Prime Minister Theresa May has made "taking back control of our borders" her key Brexit goal.

But that has put her at odds with many business leaders, and some members of her own Conservative government.

Big chunks of Britain's economy, from agriculture to health care, have come to depend on European workers — more than



ALASTAIR GRANT/AP

**Brexit demonstrators from both sides wave their placards and flags outside of Parliament in London on Tuesday. The government planned to publish plans Wednesday for a post-Brexit immigration system.**

1 million of whom have moved to Britain in the last 15 years. Businesses fear that choking off the flow of lower-skilled workers could lead to acute employee shortages.

Saffron Cordery, deputy chief executive of NHS Providers — an umbrella group for Britain's state-funded health care system — said the health sector was "deeply concerned" about the planned changes.

"High skills does not equal high pay," she told the BBC.

The government plans setting a salary threshold that immigrants will have to meet in

order to be given the right to settle in Britain. A figure of \$38,000 a year, recommended by an independent report earlier this year, is more than the starting salary for nurses, paramedics, junior doctors and many other professions.

Javid said the "exact threshold" would be decided after public consultation.

He said the plans would seek to reduce migration to "more sustainable levels," but would not set a specific target.

The government hopes the immigration plans will be seen as a sign that plans for Brexit are proceeding apace, but politically

the process of leaving the EU is gridlocked and it remains unclear whether lawmakers will approve the divorce agreement May's government has negotiated with the EU.

On Tuesday, the government ramped up preparations for the possibility that the country could crash out of the bloc without a deal — putting 3,500 soldiers on standby and warning thousands of businesses and millions of households to get ready for disruption.

The EU was set Wednesday to publish documents on its own preparations for a no-deal Brexit.

## US reviewing reports of imports from forced labor in Chinese camp

By MARTHA MENDOZA  
AND YANAN WANG  
Associated Press

BEIJING — The U.S. government said Tuesday that it is reviewing reports of forced labor at a Chinese internment camp where ethnic minorities are sewing clothes that have been shipped to the U.S. market.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection said in a statement that reporting by The Associated Press and other media "for the first time appears to link the internment camps identified in Western China to the importation of goods produced by forced labor by a U.S. company."

The AP tracked shipments from a factory in a camp in China's far western Xinjiang region to Badger Sportswear in North Carolina. The company ships clothing to universities, colleges and schools around the United States.

Experts and a human rights organization say that possibly as many as 1 million Uighurs, Kazakhs and others from predominantly Muslim groups are arbitrarily detained in such camps, whose functions range from political indoctrination to forced labor.

Following the recent news media reports, Badger said that it had suspended business with



NO HAN GUAN/AP

**Residents line up inside the Artux City Vocational Skills Education Training Service Center at the Kunshan Industrial Park in western China's Xinjiang region Dec. 3. Across the region, a growing number of internment camps have been built, where by some estimates 1 million Muslims are detained and forced to work in manufacturing.**

Chinese supplier Hietan Taida Apparel and was investigating.

The Washington-based Workers Rights Consortium, which has agreements with many educational institutions to make sure the products they sell on campus are ethically manufactured, said that "forced labor of any kind is a severe violation of university codes of conduct."

The factory was featured on a Chinese state television segment

in October that characterized the camp as a vocational training center that helps minorities steer clear of religious extremism and gain employable skills.

The AP spoke to a dozen former detainees and individuals who had friends or family in similar centers in Xinjiang who said they were given no choice but to work at factories on site.

It's against U.S. law to import products of forced labor.

## Court upholds Amsterdam's ban on new tourist stores

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — The Netherlands' highest administrative court upheld an Amsterdam municipality ban on new stores in the city's historic heart that sell goods specifically to tourists.

The Council of State ruling Wednesday is a victory for the Dutch capital's attempts to rein in the negative effects of the huge number of visitors crowding its

streets.

The court said that the ban on new tourist stores in downtown Amsterdam, which went into force in October 2017, doesn't breach European Union rules.

The ban is aimed at halting the spread of stores selling products such as mementos and cheese that cater almost exclusively to tourists. The municipality argues that they spoil the city for local residents.

## Rights court rules against Greece in Sharia law case

Associated Press

PARIS — Greece violated a prohibition on discrimination by applying Islamic religious law to an inheritance dispute among members of the country's Muslim minority, the European Court of Human Rights ruled Wednesday.

The court, based in the eastern French city of Strasbourg, ruled Greece violated the European Convention on Human Rights by applying Sharia law in the case, under which a Muslim Greek man's will bequeathing all he owned to his wife was deemed invalid after it was challenged by his sisters.

The man's widow, Chatitze

Molla Sali, appealed to the European court in 2014, having lost three quarters of her inheritance. She argued she had been discriminated against on religious grounds as, had her husband not been Muslim, she would have inherited his entire estate under Greek law.

The European court agreed. It has not yet issued a decision on what, if any, penalty it will apply to Greece.

"Greece was the only country in Europe which, up until the material time, had applied Sharia law to a section of its citizens against their wishes," the court said in its ruling.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Cat, recipient of \$19K kidney transplant, dies

**MD** BALTIMORE — The 18-year-old Baltimore cat who received a \$19,000 kidney transplant just over a year ago has died.

Stanley the cat's owner, Betsy Boyd, told The Baltimore Sun she made the decision to put him to sleep Friday. She said he became ill a few weeks ago, and was then diagnosed with peritonitis, a severe inflammation of the abdomen.

The newspaper had profiled Stanley and Boyd in March, reporting she spent 41 percent of her salary on Stanley's transplant. The newspaper reported this week that in total, Boyd has invested around \$30,000 in Stanley.

She has five other cats, including Stanley's kidney donor, whom she adopted.

## Diner finds pearl in his lunch at oyster bar

**NY** NEW YORK — A lucky diner said he happened upon a pearl while eating an oyster dish at a famous New York City restaurant.

Rick Antosh, 66, was at lunch with a friend and ordered his usual at the Grand Central Oyster Bar on Dec. 5 — a \$14.75 pan roast, which includes six oysters. Antosh told the New York Post that he felt a small object rolling around his mouth after diving into the dish, and feared he had damaged a tooth.

The Edgewater, N.J., resident said it turned out to be a pea-sized pearl.

## Teen shot by troopers after fleeing on horse

**KS** SMITH CENTER — Authorities said investigators shot and wounded a 15-year-old after he attacked a woman, fled on horseback and then fired on law enforcement in Kansas.

The Kansas Bureau of Investigation said Smith County sheriff's deputies responded to a rural home on Saturday where a 66-year-old woman reported being restrained, beaten and choked. She was taken to a hospital.

The bureau said the teen fled on horseback. Kansas Highway Patrol troopers later found the armed teen and spent a few hours trying to apprehend him. Investigators say the teen fired at troopers, and two of the troopers returned fire, striking the teen.

He was flown to a Nebraska hospital.

## Garbage piles up after trash plant breakdown

**CT** HARTFORD — Equipment failures at a Connecticut garbage plant are causing trash to pile up.

The Hartford Courant reported a regional trash facility in Hartford has been unable to burn refuse for weeks and has been hauling garbage out of state at a high cost.

South Meadows facility collects trash and recycling from

## THE CENSUS

**\$10K**

The amount a man lost on one of the first legal bets placed at Pittsburgh's Rivers Casino. David Eldridge was one of five people to make a bet during a grand opening last week. Eldridge plunked down \$10,000 on the New England Patriots over the hometown Pittsburgh Steelers on Sunday. The Steelers won, and Eldridge lost.



PHOTOS BY STEVE JACOBS/AP

## Good boy

Griffin Hawley, 4, a golden retriever service dog, is presented an honorary diploma during the Clarkson University "December Recognition Ceremony" in Potsdam, N.Y., on Saturday. Griffin's owner, Brittany Hawley, 25, who uses a wheelchair, also received a graduate degree in Occupational Therapy. Both attended 100 percent of their classes together. Inset photo: Griffin gets a congratulatory hug from his owner.

dozens of area communities and converts it into electricity.

Thomas Kirk, head of the state's Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority, said it could take until mid-January to get at least one of two out-of-commission turbines back online.

## Man with 16 DUIs gets prison time

**WI** EAU CLAIRE — A Wisconsin man with 16 drunken driving convictions in three states is headed to prison.

Bradley Armstrong, 63, of Eau Claire, was sentenced Friday to four years in state prison to be followed by three years of extended supervision.

Judge John Manydeeds told Armstrong that he was a dangerous person and that the number of convictions was "staggering." He said Armstrong needs to be off the streets to protect the public.

Armstrong has drunken driving convictions dating to 1989 in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Massachusetts.

## Baby Jesus once again stolen from mangers

**TN** KINGSFORT — Two baby Jesus figurines have once again been snatched from their Tennessee mangers.

One city's downtown Nativity scene has lost its baby Jesus for the second year in a row. After the figure's theft last year, the people responsible for the Nativity scene on Kingsport's Church Circle tethered the figure to the display.

But the Kingsport Times-News cited a Kingsport police report that says it nonetheless "appears someone was able to steal Jesus" Friday night or Saturday morning. The figure had an estimated value of \$1,200 and had been on display for less than a week.

## Police: Man tried to pay for meal with pot

**FL** PORT ST. LUCIE — Police in Florida said a 23-year-old man went through a McDonald's drive-thru and tried to pay for his order with a bag of

marijuana.

News outlets reported Port St. Lucie police said the fast food worker denied the trade and Anthony Andrew Gallagher drove off, only to return again a short time later. Police arrested him on charges of marijuana possession and driving under the influence.

Police were alerted to Gallagher's offer early Sunday morning and got a description of him from the worker.

## Dogs find woman who crashed into ravine

**MS** VICKSBURG — Several dogs in Vicksburg are credited with finding a woman who had crashed into a ravine and been reported missing.

The Vicksburg Post reported Monday that Blackie, Spottie and a third dog heard Corrine Palmer, 76, crying for help. Warren County sheriff's office reports say Palmer didn't attend an appointment that morning and was reported missing.

She had failed to drive around

a curve, and her car flipped into a 40-foot deep ravine. She was able to get out of the car, but couldn't scale the sides of the ravine.

Vicksburg Police Lt. Johnnie Edwards said he was searching for Palmer and noticed the dogs gathered at the ravine.

## Police: Teen wrecks stolen U-Haul in chase

**LA** GRETNA — Police in the New Orleans area said a teenager driving a stolen U-Haul pickup truck led officers on a chase that ended in a six-vehicle crash.

News outlets cited New Orleans police spokesman Juan Barnes and Gretna police Operations Commander Russell Lloyd as saying no one was seriously injured. Lloyd said the 17-year-old boy was arrested after the pursuit Sunday afternoon.

Lloyd said the stolen truck was spotted via crime recognition cameras, and that the driver fled when a Gretna officer tried to stop it.

From wire reports



## FACES

Making  
a splashJORDAN STRAUSS,  
INVISION/AP

'Aquaman' director James Wan says he embraced DC Comics character's campy qualities to make already-successful film

By JEN YAMATO  
Los Angeles Times

Just 48 hours ago, James Wan says, he was climbing the steep and winding steps of the Great Wall of China—a relatively relaxing exercise compared with the 14-hour-a-day, seven-days-a-week pace he'd been grinding away at for the past three months to cross the finish line with "Aquaman," the sixth film in Warner Bros.' \$3.8 billion DC Extended Universe treasure chest.

Today, Wan, 41, can take a moment to marvel over the whirlwind journey that's taken him around the world and back in a matter of days.

"Filmmaking—the actual creative filmmaking—is only 40 or 50 percent of the process of making a movie in Hollywood," says Wan. "The other 50-60 percent is navigating the big machinery of making these films."

That journey still has a big hurdle to clear when "Aquaman," starring Jason Momoa in a fresh spin on the aquatically gifted DC Comics superhero, opens Friday. It's already off to a strong start in China, where the film, made for a reported \$200 million, has outgrossed all previous DC titles—and most of the Marvel Cinematic Universe—in one week.

Wan soon will be able to wind down from the wave he's been riding for the last 2½ years.

"When the movie comes out, that's when I'll really go, whether people like it or not. It's out of my hands," he says with a smile.

The globe-trotting epic adventure, much of which is set beneath the sea among fantastically detailed ocean civilizations, with actors filmed "dry for wet" to create the illusion of being underwater, required an army of crew, artists and technicians to piece together.

Wan estimates that no shot has gone untouched by special effects. Each floating wisp of hair, every spray of bubbles must be perfect, because even the tiny details help maintain the surreal credibility of the impossible world he's built.

It was only 15 years ago that the Malaysian-born, Australian-grown filmmaker arrived in LA toting a seven-minute horror short made for \$5,000 with filmmaker buddy Leigh Whannell. From those humble beginnings exploded "Saw," the low-budget, \$100 million box-office horror hit that launched both a franchise and Wan's career.

The filmmaker has since established himself as Hollywood's go-to master of frights as the director and producer behind the "Saw," "Insidious" and "Conjuring" franchises. He stepped in to helm "Furious 7," leading a grief-stricken cast and crew to complete the action sequel in honor of Paul Walker after the actor's death, and set up his own production company, Atomic Monster, at Warner Bros.' New Line Cinema.

And then came the chance to direct "Aquaman." There was plenty to the project that enticed Wan to join Warner Bros.' DC franchise.

"The fact that Aquaman has never been seen on the big screen—you had that one shot of him in 'Batman v Superman'—was exciting," says Wan. "But let's face it: There are so many superhero movies out there, and it seems like the marketplace is just full of superhero characters and films. If I were to go and make a movie like that, I needed it to feel unique."

Wan readily says there are certain camp qualities native to the classic Aquaman, writ in the comics as a dashing blond super-merman with a dash of retro fantasy futurism. The trick, says Wan, was to lean into it.

"He's a guy that has been made fun of so much," he says. "He's been the butt of superhero jokes for the longest time. You kind of have to embrace it."

Marshall, best known for  
'Laverne,' directing, dies

By JAKE COYLE  
Associated Press

Penny Marshall was typically self-effacing whenever her brother, the late filmmaker Garry Marshall, proudly boasted that his sister was the first female director to direct a \$100 million box-office hit.

"They didn't give ME the money," Marshall joked in 2012 to The New Yorker.

Marshall, the "Laverne & Shirley" star who reinvented herself as a trailblazing Hollywood director of smash-hit comedies "Big" and "A League of Their Own," usually let others do the bragging for her. Marshall died Monday night at her Los Angeles home due to complications from diabetes, said Michelle Bega, a spokeswoman for the Marshall family.

In "Laverne & Shirley," among television's biggest hits for much of its eight-season run between 1976-83, the nasal-voiced, Bronx-born Marshall starred as Laverne Platter alongside Cindy Williams as a pair of blue-collar roommates toiling on the assembly line of a Milwaukee brewery. A spinoff of "Happy Days," the series was the rare network hit about working-class characters, and its self-empowering opening song ("Give us any chance, we'll take it / Read us any rule, we'll break it") foreshadowed Marshall's own path as a pioneering female filmmaker in the male-dominated movie business.

Little over a decade ago, a seamy about why "Laverne & Shirley" took off, Marshall wrote in her 2012 memoir "My Mother Was Nuts." "I thought it was simply because Laverne and Shirley were poor and there were no poor people on TV, but there were plenty of them sitting at home and watching TV."

Marshall directed several episodes of "Laverne & Shirley," which her older brother, the late filmmaker-producer Garry Marshall, created. Those episodes helped cement Marshall as a filmmaker. When Whoopi Goldberg clashed with director Howard Zieff, she brought in Marshall to direct "Jumpin' Jack Flash," the 1986 comedy starring Goldberg.

"Jumpin' Jack Flash" did fair business, but Marshall's next film, "A League of Their Own," The 1988 comedy, starring Tom

Hanks, is about a 12-year-old boy who wakes up in the body of a 30-year-old New York City man. The film, which earned Hanks an Oscar nomination, grossed \$151 million worldwide, or about \$320 million accounting for inflation.

Marshall reteamed with Hanks for "A League of Their Own," the 1992 comedy about the women's

Marshall,  
in 1990

professional baseball league begun during World War II. That, too, crossed \$100 million, making \$107.5 million domestically.

More than any other film, "A League of Their Own" and "Big" ensured Marshall's stamp on the late '80s, early '90s. The piano dance scene in FAO Schwartz in "Big" became iconic. Hanks' reprimand from "A League of Their Own"—"There's no crying in baseball!"—remains quoted on baseball diamonds everywhere.

In between "Big" and "A League of Their Own," Marshall made the Oliver Sacks adaptation "Awakenings," with Robin Williams and Robert De Niro. The medical drama became only the second film directed by a woman nominated for best picture.

Carole Penny Marshall was born Oct. 15, 1943, in the Bronx. Her mother, Marjorie Marshall, was a dance teacher, and her father, Anthony, made industrial films. Her mother's caustic wit—a major source of material and of pain in Marshall's memoir—was formative.

During college at the University of New Mexico, Marshall met Michael Henry, whom she married briefly for two years and with whom she had a daughter, Tracy. Marshall would later wed the director Rob Reiner, a marriage that lasted from 1971 to 1981. Tracy, who took the name Reiner, became an actress.

Marshall's brother, Gary, already established as a writer, coaxed Marshall to move out to Los Angeles in 1967. She studied acting while supporting herself as a secretary—a role she would later play on "Happy Days."



Sandra Bullock

CHARLES SYKES, INVISION/AP

## Bullock's Oscars host solution: Call on random actors

By JOHN CARUCI  
Associated Press

Sandra Bullock has an impromptu idea for how to solve the Oscars host problem, and it involves a lot of improvisation.

The Oscar-winning actress told The Associated Press on Monday at a screening of her new film "Bird Box" that she thinks random actors should be pulled out of the audience and read what's on the teleprompter to cover a segment of the show.

Organizers "don't even have to tell them it's happening. Just put up the teleprompter, and go, 'It's your turn,'" Bullock said. "You're an actor, figure it out."

Bullock says it's a genius solution that everyone in the room is perfectly suited to handle. Well, almost everyone—Bullock says she's not attending next year's ceremony, but would participate in her idea if she was.

No host for February's Academy Awards has been announced since Kevin Hart backed out of emcee duties earlier this month over backlash to homophobic tweets from years ago.

Bullock's idea relied on a bit of improvisation. She told the AP, "I just pulled that out of my butt. It's amazing."

By the end of the red carpet for "Bird Box," it already had the support of some of Bullock's co-stars.

"I don't think we need a host anymore, man."

I really believe it should be a show that we just do," Lil Rel Howery said. "Maybe if you can get celebrities to do some really funny sketches instead of one person. Something fun."

Actor BD Wong said if anyone can pull off Bullock's idea, it's her.

"She's got tons of good ideas. First of all, she's the life of every party," Wong said. "I would just give her the gig to figure out how to organize it because she would be the person to figure out how to do it."

The Oscars will be held Feb. 24.

## BUSINESS/WEATHER

# Google hit with complaint over kids' apps

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE  
Associated Press

**SAN FRANCISCO** — Nearly two dozen consumer, privacy and public health groups are urging U.S. regulators to investigate whether children are being endangered by deceptive apps in Google's app store for smartphones running on its Android software.

The 102-page complaint filed Wednesday with the Federal Trade Commission alleges Google's Play store is harming kids by allowing apps that break privacy laws, contain adult content or include manipulative advertising in a section of its Play store designed for children.

The call for FTC action is being

led by two groups, the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood and the Center for Digital Democracy, that have previously attacked Google's approach to kids. In April, they asked the FTC to crack down on Google's YouTube video site for alleged violations of children's online privacy.

Twenty other groups, including Consumer Action, Public Citizen and the U.S. Public Interest Research Group, joined in the latest complaint.

Google issued a statement emphasizing its commitment to protecting children while they are online — one of the reasons the company says it prohibits targeted advertising at children under 13.

"We take these issues very se-

riously and continue to work hard to remove any content that is inappropriately aimed at children from our platform," Google said.

More than 2 billion devices worldwide are powered by Google software, with a significant number of those being used by minors. The complaint focuses on alleged misconduct under U.S. laws and regulations.

The attempt to pressure the FTC to open an investigation comes amid an intensifying backlash against Google, Facebook and other companies that make most of their money by using their free services to track people's interests and whereabouts and then mining that information to sell ads targeted at them.

The angst has raised the spec-

ter of Congress drawing up tougher regulations to curb the tech industry's power and restrict its ability to compile digital dossiers about the people who have become increasingly dependent on its services.

Rep. David Cicilline, a Democrat from Rhode Island who has been critical of Google, issued a statement supporting the groups seeking an FTC investigation as did Sen. Tom Udall, a Democrat from New Mexico.

"It is past time for the Federal Trade Commission to crack down to protect children's privacy," Udall said in a statement.

Although the FTC doesn't typically comment on whether it will investigate issues raised in complaints, it has punished

both Google and Apple for what it deemed to be child exploitation in the past.

In 2014, it reached a settlement requiring Google to refund \$19 million for allowing apps distributed through its store to charge children for purchases made without parents' consent. That came after a similar agreement required Apple to refund \$32.5 million for in-app purchases made on iPhones, iPads and other devices without parents' permission.

## EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Dec. 20)	\$1.1703
Dollar buys (Dec. 20)	€0.8545
British pound (Dec. 20)	\$1.29
Japanese yen (Dec. 20)	¥110.00
South Korean won (Dec. 20)	₩1,098.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770
British pound	\$1.2668
Canada (Dollar)	1.3436
China (Yuan)	6.8911
Denmark (Krone)	6.5335
Egypt (Pound)	17.9652
Euro	\$1.1430/0.8749
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8238
Hungary (Forint)	282.05
Israel (Shekel)	3.7533
Japan (Yen)	112.21
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3041
Norway (Krone)	6.6733
Philippines (Peso)	53.00
Poland (Zloty)	3.75
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7522
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3686
South Korea (Won)	1,123.33
Switzerland (Franc)	0.9914
Thailand (Baht)	32.70
Turkey (Lira)	2.2694

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates, check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

## MARKET WATCH

Dec. 18, 2018

Dow Jones Industrials	82.66
	23,675.64
Nasdaq composite	30.18
	6,783.91
Standard & Poor's 500	0.22
	2,546.16
Russell 2000	-0.97
	1,377.18

## INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	5.25
Discount rate	2.75
Federal funds market rate	1.19
3-month bill	2.32
30-year bond	3.08

# EU officials agree on single-use plastics ban

Associated Press



MATT DUNHAM/AP

Plastic bottles and other plastics including a mop, lie washed up on the north bank of the River Thames in London. European Union officials agreed on Wednesday to ban some single-use plastics.

**BERLIN** — European Union officials have agreed to ban some single-use plastics, such as disposable cutlery, plates and straws, in an effort to cut marine pollution.

Representatives from the EU's 28 member states and the European Parliament said Wednesday they're following a recommendation made earlier this year by the bloc's executive branch.

Once the ban is formally approved, countries will have two years to implement it.

The measure will also affect plastic cotton buds, drink stirrers, balloon sticks and single-use plastic and polystyrene food and beverage containers.

The EU also wants to increase

the use of recycled plastic and reduce the amount of tiny plastic particles released from wet wipes, cigarette stubs and other items.

There is growing concern about the accumulation of so-called microplastics in the oceans.

## WEATHER OUTLOOK

### THURSDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



### THURSDAY IN EUROPE



### FRIDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

# Stripes

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## OPINIONS

## Russia used web to perfect its dark arts

By DAVID IGNATIUS  
Washington Post Writers Group

**I**magine American politics for a moment as a laboratory experiment. A foreign adversary (let's call it "Russia") begins to play with the subjects, using carrots and sticks to condition their behavior. The adversary develops tools to dial up anger and resentment inside the lab bubble, and even recruits unwitting accomplices to perform specific tasks.

This 21st-century political dystopia isn't drawn from "sci-fi" script. It just landed in Hollywood. It's a summary of two reports on Russia's Internet Research Agency published this week by the Senate Intelligence Committee. The studies describe a sophisticated, multi-level Russian effort to use every available tool of our open society to create resentment, mistrust and social disorder.

For a century, Russian intelligence agents have been brilliant at creating false fronts and manipulating opposition groups. Now, thanks to the internet, they seem to be perfecting these dark arts.

Even as it muddles abroad, the Kremlin has just introduced new legislation to block its own information space from foreign penetration. Under the new law, reported this week, Russia could control all internet and message traffic into the country, block any anonymous websites and, in a crisis, commandeer the Russian web from a central command point.

Put the two halves of Russian behavior together and you have a portrait of the modern information-war battlespace, as conceived by Moscow: a wide-open America (and Europe, too) that can be manipulated by orchestrated propaganda campaigns that exploit every racial, ethnic and political division; and a closed-off Rus-

sia, where the authorities can muzzle any hint of dissent.

The machinations of the Internet Research Agency were first detailed in a February indictment of 13 Russian operatives by special counsel Robert Mueller. Now, we have a detailed narrative of the breadth and depth of the Russian meddling effort. But, please, stop calling it "meddling." This was a covert-action campaign, bringing Russia's legendary intelligence skills into a new millennium. The story is laid out in chilling detail in a 46-page study by the Oxford University Computational Propaganda Research Project and a 101-page report by a cybersecurity company called New Knowledge, both commissioned by the Senate committee.

The IRA influence campaign began in 2013 using Twitter, with trials runs in Eastern Europe, and then broadened. Between 2015 and 2017, IRA posts on Facebook and Instagram were shared by more than 30 million users, according to the Oxford study.

"Russia's IRA activities were designed to polarize the U.S. public and interfere in elections," the study says, by encouraging black voters to boycott elections, pushing right-wing voters toward extremist groups, "spreading sensationalist, conspiratorial and other forms of junk political news and misinformation."

The Russians pushed every button. They sought to tap African-American anger with "Blacktivist" and "Black Matters" Facebook pages. They resorted to conspiracy through pages called "Army of Jesus," "Heart of Texas" and "Secured Borders." The list of the IRA's top-20 Facebook pages is a catalog of American rage.

The New Knowledge report blows the cover off these internet operations. It shows how Hillary Clinton and Tim Kaine were depicted as the "Satan Team," with Clinton

wearing devil's horns and Kaine bearing a red mark on his forehead. The researchers found an image of Jesus wearing a red "Make America Great Again" hat.

Instagram provided a useful platform for manipulating younger Americans. Its "Blackstagram" account had 303,663 followers, "American Veterans" had 215,680, "Sincerely Black" had 196,754 and "Rainbow Nation" had 156,465, to name the top four Instagram pages cited in the New Knowledge study.

Russia's internet activity wasn't just about fomenting division. The IRA was also trying to develop assets who could be used in later covert operations. The recruitment pitches "included attempts to drive people to the streets for events, attempts to get people to perform jobs, and more insidious attempts to connect with people around some personal challenges."

Online pitches included invitations to those "struggling with the addiction to masturbation," to "any gay/lesbian/transgender teenagers [who] need anyone to talk to" or Black Matters followers who might be "authors," "creators," "designers," or "lawyers and legal advocates." The Russians wanted to hook unwitting participants for future use.

"Recruiting an asset by exploiting a personal vulnerability ... is a timeless espionage practice. So is the tactic of infiltrating protest movements," notes the New Knowledge study. The IRA attempted both ... creating an opportunity to blackmail or manipulate these individuals in the future."

The internet is a Russian spy's dream. The West's open, democratic culture makes it an easy online target, so long as its citizens are asleep — especially when Russia's own intelligence is closed. These frightening studies should be a wake-up call.

## What more could you want in a senator than McSally?

By KATHLEEN PARKER  
Washington Post Writers Group

**A**s a résumé goes, it's hard to fathom a better fit for a file than John McCain's Senate seat than the nation's first female Air Force pilot to fly in combat — Rep. Martha McSally, R-Ariz.

Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey apparently thought so, too. On Tuesday, he selected McSally to fill the seat until 2020, when a special election will be held to fill the remaining two years of McCain's term. Assuming she wins and wants to run for re-election in 2022, McSally could conceivably spend the better part of the next four years running for the seat she'll occupy effective Jan. 3, when she's due to be sworn in.

If your head is swiveling, it may be because it was just last month that McSally lost an election bid for the Senate, when she was aiming to replace retiring Republican Sen. Jeff Flake. Hold on. Sen. Jon Kyl, whom Ducey appointed in September to fill McCain's seat, was scheduled last week that he'd only stay until the end of the year, giving someone else a chance to be in place for 2020.

Thus, McSally, who lost last month in a close race to Democratic Rep. Krysten Sinema, will become her midterm opponent's Senate colleague. McSally's eventual rise hasn't been without pitfalls, including opposition earlier this year from McCain's family. McSally, who ran against Sinema on a pro-President Donald Trump platform (despite previously criticizing the president), apparently insulted the family and McCain's memory by failing to acknowledge him when touting legislation that was

actually named for him — the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019. It was perceived as a low blow, seemingly contrived to mimic Trump, who also withheld McCain's name from mention during comments when he signed the act into law.

Upon Ducey's recommendation, McSally recently met with Cindy McCain and apologized for her oversight. McCain reportedly accepted her apology.

Other Arizonaans may not be so forgiving, though these wounds largely be Democrats who just rejected her for the office she'll hold. But nearly 48 percent of voters preferred McSally and, besides, the governor is required by state law to select someone belonging to the same party as the person whose seat has been vacated.

Though McSally's appointment was strictly a political calculation — she was considered the most likely to hold the seat against future challengers — even Ducey was initially hesitant. He and his team reportedly were upset by McSally's post-election analysis, in which she blamed her loss on external factors rather than internal, strategic ones.

Ho-hum. Blah-blah-blah. Such nit-pickery is important if you're a political operative or a talk-show host, but most normal people are more interested in politicians' human aspect — their stories and experiences — and what they bring to the table.

McSally brings quite a lot, including that rarest of qualities in this town — humility. In person, she is almost bashful. At a recent social event we both attended, which included a request for each person to introduce themselves with a few autobiographical notes, McSally's introduction was the shortest. "I'm a pilot and I like dogs," she

said.

Indeed, she does, as many will recall from her November concession video, recorded with McSally seated on her couch with her rescue golden retriever, Boomer, who seemed most interested in climbing on McSally's lap. If Boomer did steal all hearts, she certainly consolidated the canine vote.

In other words, McSally is the antithesis of the stereotypical fighter pilot as a cocky male sporting a Top Gun attitude. This despite having been first in her class at the Air War College, serving five years in the Air Force — including six deployments to Afghanistan — and retiring as a full colonel.

Seriously, folks, what more do you want in a senator?

If she has signaled too close an alignment with Trump, she can't be accused of abandoning her principles. She's a conservative, to be sure, and her voting record in the House reflects this. McSally voted favorably for Trump issues 97 percent of the time, compared with Sinema's 63 percent, according to FiveThirtyEight, which tracks congressional votes. Further, I suspect you'll find few Republican veterans seeking office who would criticize the commander in chief. One notable exception, of course, was McCain — a maverick to the last.

He was sui generis and his seat would be hard for anyone to fill. But then, there aren't many McSallys out there either. With her, the Senate gets a fearless, scrappy, humble public servant, one of eight Republican women in the Senate and the 25th in history, who also just happens to be single. Needed, to say, any potential suitors must love dogs.



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Frazz

Dilbert

Pearls Before Swine

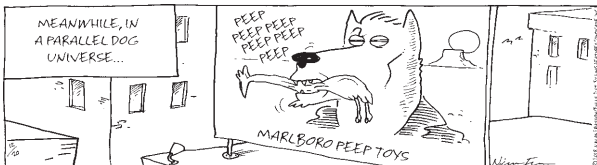
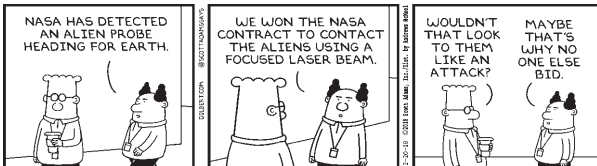
Non Sequitur

Candorville

Carpe Diem

Beetle Bailey

Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16				17			
18					19			20	21			
			22					23				
24	25	26			27	28	29			30	31	
32					33					34		
35			36	37						38		
			39				40	41				
42	43				44		45			46	47	48
49					50	51			52			
53					54				55			
56					57				58			

ACROSS

- 1 Office part-timer
- 5 Fellow
- 8 Border on
- 12 Garfield's pal
- 13 "Exodus" hero
- 14 Comic Carvey
- 15 Lass
- 16 Cartoon frame
- 17 Battery fluid
- 18 "A Streetcar Named Desire" role
- 20 Ice-skating figures
- 22 Hearing thing
- 23 Never, in Nuremberg
- 24 Beer ingredient
- 27 Risque
- 32 Swelled head
- 33 Scott's denial
- 34 Spanish gold
- 35 Braccio of "The Sopranos"
- 38 Thin nail
- 39 N.J. neighbor
- 40 Actress Joanne
- 42 Red-ink amounts
- 45 Lament
- 49 Tennis great
- 50 Ms. Thurman
- 52 Actor O'Shea
- 53 Voucher

DOWN

- 54 Buddy
- 55 Grade sch.
- 56 Blathers
- 57 Sturdy tree
- 58 Salon jobs
- 25 Previously
- 26 British peer's title
- 28 Enthusiast
- 29 Evaluative response
- 30 Mouths (Lat.)
- 31 Scepter
- 36 Puts back to zero
- 37 Pub order
- 38 With "out," depressed
- 41 Concerning
- 42 Like some lingerie
- 43 Job-safety org.
- 44 Wrestling style
- 46 Unctuous
- 47 Sheltered
- 21 Business mag
- 48 Aliases
- 51 Goat's cry

Answer to Previous Puzzle

V	O	T	E	A	L	A	S	T	O	W
I	M	A	X	A	O	L	A	E	R	O
B	A	K	E	S	A	L	E	B	L	E
E	N	E	M	Y	C	E	L	L	O	S
				P	R	A	Y	N	E	T
N	E	W	T	L	A	S	T	A	R	F
A	R	I	H	O	H	O	S	L	O	O
P	A	D	E	T	O	N	V	E	E	P
				E	T	A	O	G	L	E
R	E	W	A	R	D	O	N	S	E	T
S	L	A	M	D	R	Y	S	D	A	L
V	A	L	E	A	C	E	O	G	E	E
P	L	E	D	Y	A	P	R	A	M	S

12-20

CRYPTOQUIP

PKREWA XK DM TMZFOMQ HX  
GMMY'Z DMAEWWWA, XPM  
QH VZ MI YMRX FTJEW A  
"ZOWQHJ VJ RTEWFM GEII  
FKVM!"

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE PROBLEM OF BEING REALLY BAD AT PLAYING MUSIC UPON FIRST SEEING THE SCORE: SLIGHT READING.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals R




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# COLLEGE BASKETBALL



PHOTOS BY RICHARD SHIRO/AP

Furman head coach Bob Richey dances and celebrates the Paladins' 12th win with his players on Saturday in Greenville, S.C. Furman is 12-0 and hoping to end a 38-year NCAA Tournament drought.

## Perfectly: No. 24 Furman enjoying revival

### FROM BACK PAGE

"It's a big one," Furman coach Bob Richey said.

The Paladins are among nine undefeated teams left out of 353 Division I programs through Tuesday night. They made their first-ever appearance in the Top 25 earlier this month and see LSU as a next step toward ending a 38-year NCAA Tournament drought.

Richey expects his players will be ready for the moment, as they were when they trailed Loyola Chicago by 13 points in the second half and won 60-58 on Mounce's one-handed jam with 1.6 seconds to go. Or when they opened overtime at Villanova with a 7-0 run in the 76-68 win.

"In life, most of the time, when you get big opportunities, it still comes back to the simplest fundamentals," Richey said. "There's not going to be anything that we've got to go do different than what we've done in order to try and play our best."

Here's a quick introduction to Furman basketball:

### The coach

Richey, 35, joined Furman as an assistant in 2011 and earned the head coaching job after the 2017 season after former coach Niko Medved left for Drake. Ever since, Richey's led a revival at Furman, which hasn't enjoyed this sort of basketball attention since the 1970s, when it played in six NCAA Tournaments from 1971-80.

### Not a fluke

Furman tied its school record with 23 victories last season, Richey's first as a fulltime coach. The Paladins are already more than halfway to that mark.

### The players

■ Jordan Lyons, a junior, is



Furman's Jordan Lyons drives in for a layup while defended by Charleston Southern's Sadarius Bowser on Dec. 11. Lyons is the top scorer for the Paladins, including a 54-point game against North Greenville.

the team's leading scorer who had 54 points in defeating North Greenville earlier this season. He's joined in the backcourt by Andrew Brown, who along with Rafferty, are Furman's only two seniors in its main rotation.

■ Rafferty is a 6-foot-8 forward — Furman has no players taller than 6-8 — who's adept and relentless in post, whether it's backing down opponents for a layup or grabbing a rebound to keep the Paladins' possession alive. He's had six games with double-figure points and rebounds this season, including 15 points and 17 rebounds at Villanova.

■ Mounce is a dynamic, 6-7 sophomore comfortable with playing inside and outside. His cut toward the basket from the three-point line sprung him for the game-winning dunk at Loyola Chicago. He had six of Furman's 17 three-pointers this past Saturday in the blowout win over UNC

Wilmington.

It all has added up to high expectations for Furman basketball.

The Paladins' early run has electrified the well-respected private school that has had a few stellar athletic moments. In 1954, Frank Selvy became the school's "Man of the Century" when he scored 100 points in a game against Newberry and remains the only Division I player to accomplish the feat.

Sam Wyche may be Furman's most recognizable athletic alum. He was Furman's quarterback in the late 1960s before he helped revolutionize the game with the no-huddle offense. The Paladins football program also won a national Football Champion Subdivision title in 1988 and has been runner-up two other times.

Former U.S. men's soccer captain Clint Dempsey played at Furman before his accomplished international career.

These days, however, the hype around Greenville, S.C., is about hoops.

Brown, a senior guard, said professors and students who hadn't paid much attention to the team now congratulate him regularly and ask for updates. Selvy and Wyche both attended Saturday's win against UNC Wilmington.

"They seem like they get better every year," said Selvy, also a former head coach at Furman.

Selvy would love to see the Paladins back in the NCAA's since their last appearance in 1980, as would students who filled 3,500-seat Timmons Arena with chants of "We Want Kansas" as time ran down in the UNC Wilmington win.

Rafferty believes Furman's successful ride will continue.

"It's really coming together for us," Rafferty said. "That's one of the biggest things if we're going to keep this thing going, we've got to stay confident and stay humble."

## Top 25 roundup

# Kansas too much for South Dakota

Associated Press

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Kansas coach Bill Self hoped from the moment Charlie Moore arrived as a transfer from Cal that the talented shooting guard would provide the Jayhawks a lift off the bench.

He finally did Tuesday night. Moore knocked down six three-pointers and finished with 18 points, Dedric Lawson added 16 points and 14 rebounds, and the top-ranked Jayhawks pulled away over the final 15 minutes for an 89-53 win over plucky but overmatched South Dakota on Tuesday night.

"That's what we thought all along, that he was going to be our marksman," Self said. "It hadn't happened yet but tonight it did."

Freshman forward David McCormack added a career-best 12 points off the bench for the Jayhawks (10-0), making big strides while Lawson was on the bench in foul trouble and helping soak up minutes with Udoka Azubuike sidelined with a sprained ankle.

The Jayhawks are hopeful Azubuike will be back by the start of conference play next month.

"It felt good that I could contribute to the team," said McCormack, a five-star prospect from venerable Oak Hill Academy in Virginia. "I got more minutes so I got more opportunities."

Stanley Umude scored a game-high 23 points to lead the Coyotes (6-6), who have never defeated a ranked team in seven tries. Tyler Peterson added 15 points, and leading scorer Trey Burch-Manning was held to two points on 1-for-10 shooting before fouling out.

"Their size obviously bothered us," South Dakota coach Todd Lee said. "I was disappointed at halftime, thought it could have been a game. And the second half we didn't compete."

**No. 2 Duke 101, Princeton 50:** RJ Barrett continued his rookie-season scoring rush, finishing with 27 points to help the host Blue Devils beat the Tigers.

Fellow freshman Zion Williamson had 17 points and 10 rebounds in Duke's first game in more than a week after a season break. Duke (10-1) got off to a cold start and didn't take its first lead until more than 14 minutes in, but eventually got rolling and handed Princeton its most lopsided loss in program history.

**No. 8 Gonzaga 89, Texas-Arlington 55:** Rui Hachimura had 20 points and 11 rebounds, and the host Bulldogs beat the Mavericks, ending a two-game skid that toppled them from No. 1 in the AP Top 25.

Brandon Clarke added 17 points, 13 rebounds and three blocks for Gonzaga (10-2), which lost to No. 3 Tennessee and No. 9 North Carolina last week.



CHARLIE RIEDEL/AP

Kansas' David McCormack dunks during the second half Tuesday against South Dakota in Lawrence, Kan. No. 1 Kansas won 89-53.

**No. 14 Buffalo 71, Syracuse 59:** CJ Massinburg scored 25 points, Jeremy Harris added 18 and the Bulls rallied past the host Orange to remain unbeaten.

It was the first win over Syracuse since January 1963 for Buffalo (11-0), one of only nine undefeated teams of the 353 that play in Division I.

**No. 15 Ohio State 75, Youngstown State 56:** Kaleb Wesson had a career-high 31 points as the host Buckeyes overcame a terrible start.

Wesson was dominant in the second half, scoring 26 points as Ohio State (10-1) was again forced to win in come-from-behind fashion.

**No. 20 Marquette 92, North Dakota 66:** Markus Howard scored 26 points, including 19 over the final 10:22 of the first half to help stabilize the host Golden Eagles after a sloppy start.

Howard, a sharp-shooting guard, was 9-for-13 from the field and 4-for-6 from behind the three-point line. Sam Hauser added 21 points for Marquette (9-2).

**No. 23 Iowa 78, Western Carolina 60:** Tyler Cook scored 18 points, Luka Garza added 15 and the host Hawkeyes won their third straight.

Freshman Joe Wieskamp scored 10 points for Iowa (9-2), which forced 26 turnovers and led by as many as 27 points.

# NBA

## Scoreboard

Eastern Conference				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	13	9	.591	—
Philadelphia	12	10	.545	1 1/2
Boston	11	11	.500	3 1/2
Brooklyn	14	18	.438	9
New York	9	23	.281	14
Southeast Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Charlotte	14	15	.483	—
Orlando	14	15	.483	—
Miami	13	16	.448	1
Washington	12	17	.414	2
Atlanta	23	23	.773	7 1/2
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	20	9	.690	—
Indiana	11	16	.404	9 1/2
San Antonio	14	14	.500	5 1/2
Cleveland	23	23	.500	13
Chicago	24	24	.500	14

Western Conference				
Southwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Memphis	16	14	.533	—
Dallas	15	15	.500	1 1/2
Houston	14	16	.467	3 1/2
San Antonio	15	15	.500	3 1/2
New Orleans	15	16	.484	1 1/2
Northwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Denver	19	10	.700	—
Oklahoma City	19	10	.655	1 1/2
Portland	13	16	.447	4 1/2
Utah	14	16	.467	7
Golden State	14	17	.452	7 1/2
Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	18	13	.581	3
L.A. Clippers	17	13	.567	3 1/2
Sacramento	16	15	.516	4 1/2
Phoenix	24	22	.524	14

Tuesday's games				
Cleveland 92, Indiana 91				
116, Washington 110				
Brooklyn 115, L.A. Lakers 110				
Denver 126, Dallas 109				
Wednesday's games				
Cleveland at Charlotte				
New York at Philadelphia				
San Antonio at Orlando				
Indiana at Toronto				
Phoenix at Boston				
Brooklyn at Chicago				
Detroit at Minnesota				
New Orleans at Milwaukee				
Washington at Houston				
Golden State at Utah				
Memphis at Portland				
Oklahoma City at Sacramento				

Thursday's games				
Houston at Miami				
Dallas at L.A. Clippers				
Friday's games				
Cleveland at Toronto				
Detroit at Charlotte				
Atlanta at New York				
Indiana at Brooklyn				
Milwaukee at Boston				
Orlando at Chicago				
Minnesota at San Antonio				
Memphis at Sacramento				
Utah at Portland				
New Orleans at L.A. Lakers				

Saturday				
Nets 115, Lakers 110				
L.A. LAKERS — James 13-23 81 36, Kuzma 9-21 2-22, Chandler 2-12 5-15, Ball 9-16 2-23, Hart 2-10 1-2, Mychalik 0-1 0-0, Wagner 1-2 1-2, Zubac 0-1 0-0, Caldwell-Pope 3-7 0-0, Stephenson 3-7 0-0, Totals 42-92 13-23 110.				
BROOKLYN — Kurucs 15-0 0-3, Hollis-Jefferson 5-12 7-17, Allen 3-7 0-1 6, Russell 8-21 0-22, Harris 7-13 2-25, Dudley 6-8 0-13, Carroll 1-12 0-0 13, Davis 0-0 4, Dinwiddie 6-11 4-7 18, Totals 44-91 11-15.				
Brooklyn 32 25 27-110				
Three-point goals—L.A. Lakers 13-40 (Ball 5-8, Stephenson 2-4, James 2-7, Kuzma 2-5, Wagner 1-2, Mychalik 1-1, Hollis-Jefferson 0-2), Fouled Out—Ball, Rebounds—L.A. Lakers 48 (James 13, Brooklyn 40 (Allen, Hollis-Jefferson 8, Russell 12, Kurucs 12), Totals Fouls—L.A. Lakers 19, Brooklyn 18. A.—1,732 (17,732).				

## Nuggets 126, Mavericks 118

DALLAS — Matthews 4-12 2-2 14, Barnes 10-16 5-6 30, Jordan 4-6 3-6 11, Dwyer 5-15 10-12 23, Brunson 7-0 0-0 16, Finney-Smith 1-5 0-0 2, Powell 3-5 1-2 8, Nowitzki 1-2 0-0 3, D.Harris 4-7 0-0 8, Baraa 4-11 2-2 10, Brookhoff 0-0 0-0 0, Totals 40-86 23-30 118.

DENVER — Hernangomez 3-8 5-6 12, Jokic 13-25 4-4 32, Plumlee 5-8 1-2 11, Murray 10-18 1-2 22, Brown 2-5 0-0 5, Lyles 5-7 3-16, Goodwin 0-0 0-0 0, Morris 7-0 0-0 16, Bielecki 0-0 0-0 0, Young 0-1 0-0 0, Totals 50-90 14-18 126.

DALLAS — Matthews 4-12 2-2 14, Barnes 10-16 5-6 30, Jordan 4-6 3-6 11, Dwyer 5-15 10-12 23, Brunson 7-0 0-0 16, Finney-Smith 1-5 0-0 2, Powell 3-5 1-2 8, Nowitzki 1-2 0-0 3, D.Harris 4-7 0-0 8, Baraa 4-11 2-2 10, Brookhoff 0-0 0-0 0, Totals 40-86 23-30 118.

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DENVER — Hernangomez 3-8 5-6 12, Jokic 13-25 4-4 32, Plumlee 5-8 1-2 11, Murray 10-18 1-2 22, Brown 2-5 0-0 5, Lyles 5-7 3-16, Goodwin 0-0 0-0 0, Morris 7-0 0-0 16, Bielecki 0-0 0-0 0, Young 0-1 0-0 0, Totals 50-90 14-18 126.

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## Roundup

# Nance's tip gives Cavs win

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Larry Nance Jr. put himself in perfect position to make the final play Tuesday night.

After outresting Victor Oladipo in front of the basket, the Cleveland Cavaliers center watched patiently as he anticipated Rodney Hood's errant layup then threw up his right hand and barely beat the buzzer.

Nance finished with 15 points, a career-high 16 rebounds, six assists and the first game-winning shot of his pro career to give the Cavaliers a rare 92-91 road victory. It ended Indiana's seven-game winning streak.

"I told Hood to put the ball up on the rim with a couple seconds left so I can see if I could do something with it," Nance said. "He made a good move and did exactly that. I was lucky enough to get a hand on it."

The shot set off a wild scene in which Cavs players began mobbing Nance before the replay review confirmed the call. Even some of Cleveland's injured players joined the celebration.

Inside the Pacers locker room players watched the replay, which appeared to show Nance tossing Oladipo to the ground and lamented the lack of a whistle.

Still, Pacers coach Nate McMillan knew it should never have come down to that play. Indiana came into the game as the league's hottest team but lacked the intensity, passion and precision that had defined the first part of this season.

On a night six Cavs players scored in double figures, including Hood, who had 17 points, Indiana shot a dismal 39.8 percent from the field, was 4-for-22 on three-pointers and lost for the first time this season when allowing fewer than 97 points.

With 9.5 seconds left, the Pacers still led 91-90 with Oladipo shooting two free throws.

But when he missed both, the Cavs got one more chance after calling timeout — and Nance made them pay.

"Larry was terrific, even beyond the putback," Cleveland coach Larry Drew said. "I



DARRON CUMMINGS/AP

The Cavaliers' Larry Nance Jr. tips in the game-winning shot against the Pacers' as time expires Tuesday in Indianapolis.

thought he did a phenomenal job. Offensively, he made some terrific passes. He took good shots, he got to the offensive glass, and defensively he really competed."

**Nets 115, Lakers 110:** D'Angelo Russell had 22 points and a career-high-tying 13 assists against his former team, and host Brooklyn ran the NBA's longest winning streak to six games by beating Los Angeles.

Joe Harris added 19 points and Spencer Dinwiddie scored 18 for the Nets, who last won six in a row from March 25 to April 3, 2015. Rondae Hollis-Jefferson finished with 17 points and Jared Dudley made some big baskets down the stretch to score 13.

LeBron James bounced back from his lowest-scoring game of the season with 36 points, 13 rebounds and eight assists.

**Nuggets 126, Mavericks 118:** Nikola Jokic had 32 points and 16

rebounds, Jamal Murray dished out a career-high 15 assists and host Denver extended its home winning streak to seven games by beating Dallas.

At 21-9, the Nuggets matched the 1976-77 squad for the best start through 30 games in the franchise's NBA history. They also remain on top of the Western Conference by percentage points over Golden State. This is rarefied air for the Nuggets: The last time they had played more than 25 games and were alone in first place in the conference was March 1977.

**Hawks 118, Wizards 110:** Jeramy Lin scored 12 of his 16 points in the final period and Atlanta overcame Bradley Beal's 29 points for visiting Washington.

Seven players scored in double figures to help the last-place Hawks (7-23) stop a three-game skid. John Collins had 20 points and 13 rebounds.

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## NHL

## Roundup

# Flyers' Hart wins NHL debut in goal

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Carter Hart made 22 saves in his NHL debut and Shayne Gostisbehere and James van Riemsdyk each had a goal and an assist as the Philadelphia Flyers defeated the Detroit Red Wings 3-2 on Tuesday night and made interim coach Scott Gordon a winner in his first game.

Radko Gudas also scored for Philadelphia, which snapped a four-game losing streak.

The Flyers were playing their first game since head coach Dave Hakstol was fired on Monday, a move that capped a tumultuous few weeks. General manager Ron Hextall was fired last month and new GM Chuck Fletcher ended Hakstol's four-year tenure after a 1-4 road trip was punctuated by Saturday's 5-1 loss at Vancouver. The Flyers entered the game late in the Eastern Conference with 28 points.

Fletcher promoted Gordon from the Flyers' AHL Lehigh Valley affiliate.

Dennis Chelowski and Jacob de la Rose scored for Detroit, which has lost four in a row and five of six.

**Maple Leafs 7, Devils 2:** John Tavares, Auston Matthews and Patrick Marleau scored in the opening 13:38 to lead visiting Toronto past New Jersey.

**Rangers 3, Ducks 1:** Kevin Hayes scored on a short-handed breakaway with 40 seconds re-

maining and host New York rallied to beat Anaheim.

**Panthers 5, Sabres 2:** Evgenii Dadonov had two goals and an assist to pace visiting Florida in its win over Buffalo.

**Sharks 4, Wild 0:** Logan Couture scored twice and Martin Jones made 26 saves for his first shutout this season and the 20th of his career in visiting San Jose's win over Minnesota.

**Blackhawks 2, Predators 1:** Cam Ward made 30 saves in his first start since Corey Crawford was sidelined by a concussion, helping host Chicago top Nashville.

**Stars 2, Flames 0:** Ben Bishop got help from backup Anton Khudobin in a combined shutout and host Dallas beat Pacific Division-leading Calgary.

**Islanders 3, Coyotes 1:** Robin Lehner stopped 35 shots, Anthony Beauvillier scored his fourth goal in five games and visiting New York beat struggling Arizona.

**Blues 4, Oilers 1:** Pat Marleau was credited with the tiebreaking goal following a replay review early in the third period, and visiting St. Louis went on to beat Edmonton.

**Lightning 5, Canucks 2:** Nikita Kucherov had a goal and an assist to reach 50 points this season and lead visiting Tampa Bay past Vancouver.

**Kings 4, Jets 1:** Austin Wagner scored twice and host Los Angeles snapped a four-game losing streak by beating Winnipeg.

## Schedule

### Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division						
Team	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF/GA
Tampa Bay	35	28	7	2	58	143/95
Toronto	34	22	10	2	46	124/95
Buffalo	35	20	10	5	43	107/93
Boston	34	18	12	4	40	94/88
Montreal	34	17	12	5	37	94/93
Ottawa	35	15	16	4	34	116/135
Detroit	35	14	16	5	33	100/116
Chicago	32	13	13	6	32	108/115
Metropolitan Division						
Washington	32	20	9	3	42	122/100
Columbus	33	18	12	3	39	108/105
N.Y. Islanders	33	18	12	3	40	96/83
Pittsburgh	33	15	12	6	36	112/108
N.Y. Rangers	33	15	13	5	35	97/107
Carolina	32	14	13	5	33	84/93
Philadelphia	32	13	15	4	30	96/118
New Jersey	32	11	14	7	29	96/118

### Western Conference

Central Division						
Team	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF/GA
Winnipeg	34	22	10	2	46	123/98
St. Louis	35	21	11	3	46	108/88
Colorado	34	18	10	6	42	122/106
Dallas	33	17	14	2	37	94/90
Minnesota	32	17	14	2	36	101/92
St. Louis	32	13	15	4	30	92/108
Chicago	36	11	19	6	28	101/136
Pacific Division						
Calgary	35	20	11	4	46	122/95
San Jose	35	19	11	5	43	116/103
Anaheim	36	19	12	5	43	94/103
Vegas	36	19	15	2	40	96/93
Edmonton	35	18	14	3	39	99/105
Vancouver	37	16	17	4	34	101/123
Arizona	33	14	17	2	30	82/92
Los Angeles	35	13	19	3	29	93/110

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

### Monday's games

Florida 5, Washington 2  
Boston 4, Montreal 0  
Ottawa 4, Nashville 3, OT  
N.Y. Islanders 4, Colorado 1

### Tuesday's games

Philadelphia 3, Detroit 2  
Anaheim 3, Los Angeles 2  
N.Y. Rangers 3, Anaheim 1  
San Jose 4, Minnesota 0

### Wednesday's games

Florida 5, Vancouver 2  
Pittsburgh 4, Montreal 1  
Minnesota at Pittsburgh  
Detroit at Carolina

### Thursday's games

Anaheim at Boston  
New Jersey at Columbus  
Florida at Dallas  
Philadelphia at Toronto

### Friday's games

Buffalo at Calgary  
Ottawa at New Jersey  
Chicago at Colorado

### Saturday's games

Calgary 0, Dallas 0  
Dallas 1, St. Louis 1  
St. Louis 1, Dallas 1

### Sunday's games

Calgary 0, Dallas 0  
Dallas 1, St. Louis 1  
St. Louis 1, Dallas 1

### Monday's games

Calgary 0, Dallas 0  
Dallas 1, St. Louis 1  
St. Louis 1, Dallas 1

### Tuesday's games

Calgary 0, Dallas 0  
Dallas 1, St. Louis 1  
St. Louis 1, Dallas 1

### Wednesday's games

Calgary 0, Dallas 0  
Dallas 1, St. Louis 1  
St. Louis 1, Dallas 1

### Thursday's games

Calgary 0, Dallas 0  
Dallas 1, St. Louis 1  
St. Louis 1, Dallas 1

### Friday's games

Calgary 0, Dallas 0  
Dallas 1, St. Louis 1  
St. Louis 1, Dallas 1

### Saturday's games

Calgary 0, Dallas 0  
Dallas 1, St. Louis 1  
St. Louis 1, Dallas 1

### Sunday's games

Calgary 0, Dallas 0  
Dallas 1, St. Louis 1  
St. Louis 1, Dallas 1

### Monday's games

Calgary 0, Dallas 0  
Dallas 1, St. Louis 1  
St. Louis 1, Dallas 1



New York Islanders defenseman Adam Pelech, left, battles Arizona Coyotes right wing Josh Archibald on Tuesday in Glendale, Ariz.

### Rangers 3, Ducks 1

Anaheim 0 1 0-1  
Los Angeles 0 0 3-3  
Second Period—1, Anaheim, Aberg 11 (Geddy, Kape), 14:09.

Third Period—2, N.Y. Rangers, Nemesnik 4 (Hovden, Vesey), 9:52; 3, N.Y. Rangers, Hayes 9 (Nemestikovic), 19:20 (sh.). 4, N.Y. Rangers, Chytil 1 (Zibanejad, Nemesnikovic), 19:41.

Shots on goal—Anaheim 8-6-15. N.Y. Rangers 5-5-14-14. Power-play opportunities—Anaheim 0 of 5; N.Y. Rangers 0 of 3.

Goals—Anaheim, Hanson 2-7-0 (23 shots-27 saves). N.Y. Rangers, Gervin 5-4-0 (15-14). T—2:27.

A—17,590 (18,006). T—2:27.

### Panthers 5, Sabres 2

Florida 0 1 4-5  
Buffalo 0 1 0-2  
First Period—1, Buffalo, Skinner 25 (Eichel, Reinhart), 3:48.

Second Period—2, Florida, Browner 7 (McCann, Matheson), 9:17; 3, Buffalo, Ristolainen 4 (Skinner, Reinhart), 11:08.

Third Period—4, Florida, Barkov 15 (Vandell, Huberdeau), 0:58 (pp.); 5, Florida, Dadonov 15 (30-6, Florida, Vatrano 9 (Borgstrom, Dadonov), 4:42; 7, Florida, Dadonov 16 (Barkov), 17:30.

Shots on goal—Florida 9-11-16-36. Buffalo 6-17-32. Buffalo 0 of 3; Buffalo 0 of 3.

Goals—Florida, Luongo 7-5-1 (32 shots-30 saves). Buffalo, Hutton 13-9-2 (35-31). T—2:27.

A—17,602 (19,070). T—2:27.

### Flyers 3, Red Wings 2

Detroit 0 1 1-2  
Philadelphia 1 2 0-3  
First Period—1, Philadelphia, Riemsdyk 4 (Giroux, Gostisbehere), 18:33.

Second Period—2, Detroit, Chelowski 6 (Nyquist, Larkin), 4:12 (pp.); 3, Philadelphia, Gudas 2 (Konecny, van Riemsdyk), 8:52; 4, Philadelphia, Gostisbehere 4 (Patric, Ratt), 15:17.

Third Period—5, Detroit, de la Rose 2 (Ehrn, Fink), 2:00.

Shots on goal—Detroit 8-6-22. Philadelphia 11-9-33-33.

Goals—Philadelphia, Bernier 4-9-1 (33 shots-30 saves). Philadelphia, Hart 1-0-0 (22-20).

A—255 (19,543). T—2:29.

### Lightning 5, Canucks 2

Tampa Bay 1 2 5-0  
Vancouver 0 1 0-2  
First Period—1, Tampa Bay, Kucherov 15 (Point, 8-4-2, Vancouver, Motté 5 (Virtanen, Stecher), 9:17; 3, Tampa Bay, Paquette 8 (Marti, 11-07).

Second Period—4, Tampa Bay, Erne 4 (Girard, Pugette), 8:37.

Third Period—2, Vancouver, Tanev 2 (Rousseau), 5:46; 6, Tampa Bay, Stamkos 17 (Hedman, Johnson), 17:22; 7, Tampa Bay, Palat 3 (Stralman, Kucherov), 18:37.

Shots on goal—Tampa Bay 12-10-31. Vancouver 16-14-8-36.

Power-play opportunities—Tampa Bay 0 of 4; Vancouver 0 of 6.

Goals—Tampa Bay, Vasilevsky 11-3-2 (38 shots-36 saves). Vancouver, Nilsson 3-7-1 (36-32).

A—17,193 (18,910). T—3:10.

### Kings 4, Jets 1

Winnipeg 0 1 0-1  
Los Angeles 1 2 1-4  
First Period—1, Los Angeles, Wagner 2 (Brockley), 13:00.

Second Period—2, Winnipeg, Perreault 8 (Morrissey, Lettice), 1:52; 3, Los Angeles, Lafallo 7 (Kopitar, Dougherty), 3:06; 4, Los Angeles, Wagner 3 (Luff), 18:08.

Third Period—5, Los Angeles, Thompson 3 (Brown), 19:55.

Shots on goal—Winnipeg 11-9-8-28. Los Angeles 10-12-9-31.

Power-play opportunities—Winnipeg 0 of 3; Los Angeles 0 of 3.

Goals—Winnipeg, Hellebuyck 15-9-1 (37 shots-27 saves). Los Angeles, Quick 5-8-2 (28-27).

A—17,405 (18,230). T—2:30.

### Islanders 3, Coyotes 1

N.Y. Islanders 1 2 0-3  
Arizona 0 1 0-1  
First Period—1, Islanders, Kempe 1 (Goslings, Cousins), 9:14; 2, N.Y. Islanders, Nelson 11 (Pulock, Eberle), 3:38; 4, N.Y. Islanders, Beauvillier 11 (Bailey), 8:29.

Second Period—3, N.Y. Islanders, Nelson 11 (Pulock, Eberle), 3:38; 4, N.Y. Islanders, Beauvillier 11 (Bailey), 8:29.

Shots on goal—N.Y. Islanders 14-13-5-32. Arizona 10-11-16-37.

Power-play opportunities—N.Y. Islanders 0 of 2; Arizona 0 of 3.

Goals—N.Y. Islanders, Lehner 5-6-3 (37 shots-36 saves). Arizona, Kuemper 4-8-2 (32-28).

A—11,640 (17,125). T—2:24.

### Blues 4, Oilers 1

St. Louis 1 0 3-4  
Edmonton 0 1 0-1  
First Period—1, St. Louis, O'Leary 1 (Schenn, Boumeester), 8:12.

Second Period—2, St. Louis, O'Leary 3 (Khairi, Jones), 5:29.

Third Period—3, St. Louis, Maroon 2 (Sozak, Thomas), 2:15; 4, St. Louis, Tarsenko 10 (Schenn, Schwartz), 11:43 (pp.). 5, St. Louis, Schwartz 3 (O'Reilly, Schenn), 18:09.

Shots on goal—St. Louis 13-6-11-30. Edmonton 8-6-23.

Power-play opportunities—St. Louis 1 of 3; Edmonton 0 of 3.

Goals—St. Louis, Allen 11-9-4 (23 shots-22 saves). Edmonton, Talbot 7-10-2 (29-26).

A—18,347 (18,641). T—2:32.

### Maple Leafs 7, Devils 2

Toronto 3 2 2-7  
New Jersey 0 1 0-2  
First Period—1, Toronto, Tavares 11 (Kadri, Matthews), 6:01; 2, Toronto, Matheson 17 (Zuccarello), 11:07.

Second Period—1, Toronto, Marner 9 (Tavarez), 1:45; 6, Toronto, Rielly 11 (Brown, Kadri), 18:44.

Third Period—7, New Jersey, Hiescher 8 (Palmieri, Hall), 14:47; 8, Toronto, Ernis 6 (Lundhorn, Brown), 18:28; 9, Toronto, Ennis 7 (Gardiner, Brown), 18:30.

Shots on goal—Toronto 11-10-31. New Jersey 8-12-29.

Power-play opportunities—Toronto 0 of 3; New Jersey 0 of 3.

Goals—Toronto, Andersen 18-9-1 (29 shots-27 saves). New Jersey, Blackwell 0-0-0 (10-8). Kinkaid 11-9-2 (21-16).

A—14,586 (16,514). T—2:31.



Flyers goaltender Carter Hart acknowledges the crowd after his debut Tuesday against the Detroit Red Wings in Philadelphia.

MATT SLOCUM/AP

A—21,223 (19,717). T—2:28.



## COLLEGE FOOTBALL

## UAB rolls to Boca Raton win

By HARVEY FIALKOV  
Associated Press

BOCA RATON, Fla. — Two seasons after shutting down its football program, UAB closed out the year on an electrifying note.

Tyler Johnston III threw for 373 yards and four touchdowns, three of them to Xavier Ubosi, and UAB beat Northern Illinois 37-13 in the Boca Raton Bowl on Tuesday night.

Ubosi had seven catches for 227 yards for the Conference USA champion Blazers (11-3), who got their first-ever bowl victory in three appearances. UAB played in its second consecutive bowl since the program was reinstated after the self-imposed hiatus.

"I guess in our wildest dreams we dreamed of winning a conference championship and then cap it off with a bowl win, so it's really that sweet," UAB coach Bill Clark said. "I don't think it could have gone any better for us, so I'm very proud."

Northern Illinois (8-6), the Mid-American Conference champion, has lost six consecutive bowl games since beating Arkansas in the 2012 GoDaddy.com Bowl.

"It really comes down to three things. We gave up three touchdowns on three deep balls," NIU coach Rod Carey said. "Old-fashioned routes. Give those guys credit. They ran by us. They threw it, caught it. That's the difference. If not, it's 16-13. In the fourth quarter, I like our chances."

"We have to own it as coaches. We have to own it as players. We didn't coach good enough. We didn't play good enough. Thirteen points isn't winning football. Bummer."

Johnston, who took over the starting job for the injured A.J. Erdely at midseason, set career highs in passing yards and touchdown passes, and Ubosi's 227 yards were the third-most receiving in a game in school history. Ubosi came into the game ranked second in the country at 21.8 yards per catch, and his TD receptions covered 70, 46 and 66 yards.

"I'm surprised but at the same



LYNNE SLADKY/AP

UAB wide receiver Xavier Ubosi, left, avoids a tackle by Northern Illinois safety Kyle Harrell on his way to scoring a touchdown during the first half of the Boca Raton Bowl on Tuesday in Boca Raton, Fla.

time you work for it," Ubosi said. "Just practice hard and whatever you do in practice you'll do in the game."

All-American Spencer Brown, who entered with 1,167 rushing yards and a school-record 16 touchdowns, caught a 3-yard shovel pass for a score and had 78 yards on the ground.

UAB's 10th-ranked defense harassed Huskies quarterback Marcus Childers, sacking him five times and forcing two fumbles (one lost). He finished 22-for-29 for 179 yards and had 35 yards rushing on 18 carries. NIU led the nation with 50 sacks, but never got to Johnston.

Johnston hit Ubosi in stride for a 70-yard TD just 18 seconds after the opening kickoff.

"It made it easier for me," Johnston said. "Everyone wants to score on the first play of the game. I trusted (Ubosi). He said, 'Just put it in front of me and I'll go get it.'"

After a penalty on a punt gave

the Blazers a fourth-and-1 opportunity that they converted, the duo connected again with 5:11 remaining in the first half for a 24-10 lead.

The Huskies cut it to 27-13 early in the third, but a little over two minutes later, Johnston found Ubosi down the sideline for his third score.

Nick Vogel kicked three field goals for UAB.

"We talk a lot about making history," Clark said. "We talked about it with Tyler and Xavier and we knew we were going to make history. We wanted to finish."

Carey said the loss shouldn't blemish the careers of his senior class.

"It's a reward for a championship team," Carey said. "We want to win. Don't get me wrong. I'm not going to let the narrative be about me. You want to write I'm 0-6 in bowl games, I could take that. I'm a big boy. But that's not what it's about."

## Thursday's bowl capsule

## Gasparilla Bowl

Marshall (8-4) vs.

South Florida (7-5)

**Series record:** First meeting.

**What's at stake:** Marshall, coming off a regular season-ending loss to Virginia Tech, looks to improve to 6-0 in bowl games under coach Doc Holliday. The Thundering Herd's .846 winning percentage (11-12) in bowl games is the nation's best among FBS programs with at least five appearances. South Florida enters on a five-game losing streak after opening 7-0 and climbing into the Top 25.

**Key matchup:** Marshall's stingy run defense against a balanced USF attack featuring a pair of runners in Jordan Cronkrite and Johnny Ford, who both average more than 6 yards per carry. The Thundering Herd rank ninth nationally in run defense (103.9) and

haven't allowed a 100-yard rusher this season. USF averages 202.1 yards per game rushing and 242.1 passing.

**Players to watch:** Marshall: Freshman RB Brandon Knox is coming off a 204-yard rushing performance against Virginia Tech, his third 100-yard game of the season. QB Isaiah Green has thrown for 2,238 yards, 15 touchdowns and 10 interceptions. Leading receiver Tyre Brady has 66 receptions for 914 yards and nine TDs.

South Florida: Cronkrite, a transfer from Florida, has averaged 6.3 yards per carry while rushing for 1,095 yards and nine TDs. Ford (737 yards, eight TDs) came on strong late, averaging 71 yards per attempt. Graduate transfer QB Blake Barnett began his career as Alabama's starter. He's thrown for 2,498 yards, 11 TDs and 11 interceptions. He's also rushed for eight TDs.

**Facts & figures:** Holliday, who's in

his ninth season at Marshall, and USF coach Charlie Strong worked together on Urban Meyer's staff at Florida from 2005-07. The Gators won the 2006 BCS national title with Holliday serving as associate head coach and safeties coach, while Strong was co-defensive coordinator and linebackers coach.

The Bulls are in a bowl for the fourth consecutive season, second under Strong. They beat Power Five opponents South Carolina and Texas Tech in the past two appearances.

**Homefield advantage:** The Gasparilla Bowl is formerly the St. Petersburg Bowl, which was played at Tropicana Field, home of baseball's Tampa Bay Rays. The game is being played at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa for the first time. That's home for the NFL's Buccaneers, as well as USF, which is 4-2 there this season.



JOHN BAZEMORE/AP

Georgia quarterback Justin Fields' name appeared in the NCAA transfer database on Tuesday, a move that might have affected some recruits' decisions on early signing day Wednesday.

## Five-star recruit flips to Michigan

## DB Hill nixes Alabama on early signing day

Associated Press

Dax Hill, a five-star defensive back from Oklahoma, flipped from Alabama and signed with Michigan on Tuesday, the first day of the early signing period.

Hill had verbally committed to Michigan but switched to Alabama a few weeks ago. Wolverines coach Jim Harbaugh lured him back when it mattered most.

Hill is the younger brother of Oklahoma State running back Justice Hill.

Not much drama was expected with another opportunity for prospects to sign in February, but the top schools figured to have most of their class of 2019 locked in by the end of the day.

The second year of college football's early signing period promised to be busy, with most teams expected to lock up the bulk of their 2019 classes Wednesday and Alabama working on another recruiting championship.

Last season was the first with an early signing period in college football. It quickly replaced the traditional February signing period as the primary time for high school players to make their verbal commitments binding by inkling national letters of intent. More than 70 percent of available scholarships in FBS were filled during the early signing period last year and coaches expected that to go up this year.

Based on verbal commitments, Alabama was lined up again to have the No. 1 recruiting class in the country after relinquishing that mythical title last year to SEC rival Georgia.

Florida swept a trio of highly rated recruits from Lakeland High School, with offensive lineman Devayie Hammond, defensive end Lloyd Summerville and tight end Keon Zipperer all picking the Gators in a signing day ceremony at the school.

Summerville drew some attention earlier this month when he

posted photos on Twitter of himself and his father dressed in Florida uniforms.

A late flip by a quarterback from Michigan affected Ohio State and Georgia and had some wondering if Justin Fields could have played a part.

Dwan Mathis from Belleville, Mich., flipped from the Buckeyes to the Bulldogs, a day after Fields' name appeared in the NCAA's transfer database. Fields was a five-star recruit in the 2018 class and it has already been speculated that he could end up in Columbus, Ohio, next season, playing for new coach Ryan Day.

The uncertainty around Fields had Georgia scrambling to add a quarterback to its 2019 class.

Defensive end Zach Harrison, the top-ranked prospect in Ohio, gave Day his first big victory as the Buckeyes' incoming head coach. Harrison, from Olentangy Orange High School, not far from Ohio State's campus, picked the Buckeyes over Michigan and Penn State.

The Buckeyes' 2019 class is lagging behind its usual top-five standard, in part because it is likely to be a relatively small group and in part because of the uncertainty this season surrounding outgoing head coach Urban Meyer.

Meyer announced earlier this month he will retire after the Rose Bowl on Jan. 1, giving the 39-year-old Day his first head coaching job. He has been Ohio State's offensive coordinator.

Other notable decisions included cornerback Elijah Blakes, a top junior college recruit who signed with Texas A&M after committing to Oregon. The Ducks, who are likely to have a top-10 class, also lost out on defensive back Jeremiah Criddle of California to Oklahoma.

Noah Cain, one of the top running backs in the country from IMG Academy in Florida, picked Penn State.

## NFL



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/AP

Cleveland Browns interim coach Gregg Williams speaks with umpire Clay Martin during the second half of Sunday's game against the Broncos in Denver. Williams has guided the Browns to four wins since taking over on Oct. 29 and has them playing meaningful December games.

# Williams building strong case to be Browns boss

BY TOM WITHERS  
Associated Press

BEREA, Ohio — The Browns' playoff odds remain immense, nearly impossible.

Gregg Williams' chances, on the other hand, have improved.

Since being elevated to Cleveland's interim coach when Hue Jackson was fired on Oct. 29, Williams, the team's in-grill defensive coordinator, has guided the Browns to four wins — two on the road — and has a team that didn't win one last season playing meaningful December games, believing anything is possible.

Seven weeks ago, Williams was a long-shot candidate. He now looks like a serious one.

"He deserves credit for a lot of stuff that's going on now, just the fire and the energy that he's bringing to this team has been incredible," Browns wide receiver Breshad Perriman said Monday, two days after a 17-16 win in Denver. "I feel like you can't put a limit for the amount of credit you give him."

Williams has won over his players, who feel his attention to detail and demand for accountability have brought out the best in them. He's also endeared himself to a segment of battle-scarred Cleveland fans, who would hate to see Williams leave and prosper elsewhere after his successful substitute stint.

General manager John Dorsey, who is heading the team's coaching search, will interview Williams for the full-time job once the season ends. Until then, the 60-year-old Williams won't discuss his future.

The gregarious coach loves to talk — about anything. But with two games to go, Williams is not going to address his interest in coaching the Browns (6-7-1) in 2019 and beyond.

"I appreciate to answer that, and all honesty, I do not think it is fair to the players or to anybody here," he said. "The most important thing is making sure that these guys understand how we continue to win and how we get ready for the Bengals (on Sunday). Really, when they see the mindset is that way — that is the way that my mindset has always been. We will

talk about that at the end."

There is no denying Williams' impact in less than two months.

The Browns were in shambles when he took over, headed toward fourth round. But Williams has helped salvage this season — Cleveland is technically still alive for a wild-card spot — while providing a glimpse of a future that hasn't looked nearly this promising in years.

Williams has more wins in six weeks than Jackson got in 40. He has demanded, and the Browns have responded.

"I just think it was just more attention to detail, and just us in the locker room just not letting all the outside elements affect us and affect how we play," said safety Jabrill Peppers. "It would have been easy to crumble and blame everything else that was going on, but we stuck together, fought it out and we're on the cusp of having our first winning season around here in a long time, so everything falls how it may."

Peppers said he didn't have any "ill will" toward Jackson, but indicated the Browns have been better prepared by Williams, who stresses competition at all times.

"We just practice real-game situations competitively now instead of having the game be the first time that situation arises," Peppers said. "Let's say it's a two-minute drive, instead of the game being that first time our offense goes into two-minute mode, we do it in practice — competitive. We're the ultimate competitors, so we all want to win that period, both offensively and defensively. I think that's been the main thing that he's brought that helps us win."

It's possible that Dorsey, who recently celebrated his one-year anniversary with the Browns, already has his next coach in mind — his wish list may include former Packers coach Mike McCarthy and Oklahoma's Lincoln Riley — and there may be nothing Williams can do to dissuade him from selecting another coach.

However, if Cleveland wins its last two games and finishes with a winning record for the first time since 2007, Williams could make it very difficult for Dorsey not to hire him.

## Leaders

AFC				
Week 15				
Team	Att	Com	Yds	TD Int
Mahomes, KC	516	346	4543	45
Ruehlhager, PIT	580	388	4462	39
Brady, NE	513	338	3979	24
Luck, IND	557	375	3951	34
P. Rivers, LAC	447	310	3861	31
D. Carr, OAK	494	338	3697	19
Watson, HOU	420	290	3592	31
Keenum, DEN	511	331	3396	15
Mayfield, CLE	497	260	3051	11
Bortles, JAC	369	223	2572	10
Rushers				
Team	Att	Com	Yds	TD
Mixon, CIN	207	99	458	47
Lindsay, DEN	182	99	54	65
L. Miller, HOU	193	91	42	97
Conner, PIT	201	90	45	30
D. Henry, TEN	178	82	50	69
N. Chubb, CLE	164	86	50	92
Kareem Hunt, KC	181	84	45	45
M. Gordon, LAC	153	80	52	34
Michell, NE	177	75	43	34
Maack, IND	158	75	48	49
Receivers				
Team	Att	Com	Yds	TD
D. Hopkins, HOU	94	132	141	49
T. Hill, KC	78	130	167	75
Smith-Schuster, PIT	98	124	134	97
Keleke, KC	93	122	131	43
A. Brown, PIT	90	112	124	78
K. Allen, LAC	88	107	122	54
T. Hilton, IND	67	107	160	68
Boyd, CIN	76	102	108	49
E. Sanders, DEN	71	86	122	64
O. Aakerson, DEN	68	148	135	46
Punters				
Team	No	Yds	FG	LAvg
Kern, TEN	64	34	62	47
Koch, BAL	53	249	65	47
Sanchez, IND	50	252	51	46
L. Edwards, NYJ	73	335	67	45
R. Allen, NE	54	247	66	45
B. Colquitt, CLE	73	349	79	45
Haack, MIA	76	343	65	45
D. Colquitt, KC	61	131	109	45
Bojorquez, BUF	45	202	60	45
Coake, JAC	72	323	72	44
Punt returns				
Team	No	Yds	Avg	Long
A. Roberts, NYJ	21	312	14.9	71
D. King, LAC	21	286	13.6	73
Jackson, CIN	18	291	16.2	58
Hill, KC	19	210	11.1	91
C. Rogers, IND	12	212	10.6	51
Dw. Harris, OAK	18	175	9.7	49
Peppers, CLE	23	207	9.0	33
Swain, PIT	23	232	10.1	33
Tyler Ervin, HOU	21	175	8.3	27
Kickoff returns				
Team	No	Yds	LAvg	Long
Patterson, NE	21	633	30.1	95
Jake Grant, MIA	18	535	29.7	100
A. Roberts, NYJ	34	912	26.8	86
Ericsson, CIN	33	885	26.8	77
Swain, PIT	28	746	26.7	97
D. King, LAC	20	477	23.8	40
Ch. Moore, BAL	18	412	22.9	61
Dw. Harris, OAK	24	526	21.9	31
Switzer, PIT	26	519	20.0	30

NFC				
Week 15				
Team	Att	Com	Yds	TD Int
Ryan, ATL	538	376	4307	30
GoFt, LA	512	330	4273	27
A. Rodgers, GBY	537	377	3974	23
Cousins, MIN	454	384	3913	26
Manning, NYG	500	331	3699	19
Brees, NOR	450	303	3191	31
Newton, CAR	471	320	3365	24
Stafford, DET	431	329	3395	19
Prescott, DAL	457	309	3337	17
Wentz, PHI	401	279	3074	21
Rushers				
Team	Att	Com	Yds	TD
E. Elliott, DAL	286	139	47	41
Gurley, LA	249	143	274	23
Barkley, NYG	223	115	52	78
McCaffrey, CAR	194	97	50	59
A. Peterson, WAS	221	92	42	90
C. Carson, SEA	201	91	45	26
Kamara, NOR	187	86	45	49
Dw. Johnson, ARI	231	84	36	53
Breida, SAN	149	79	53	66
J. Howard, CHI	216	73	36	25
Receivers				
Team	Att	Com	Yds	TD
Ju. Jones, ATL	100	151	151	58
M. Evans, TAM	74	138	179	72
D. Adams, GBY	100	135	132	57
M. Thomas, NOR	109	126	116	72
Thielen, MIN	105	125	120	68
A. Hise, SFO	87	115	125	68
Cooks, LA	72	107	154	57
R. Woods, LA	78	106	142	36
Beckham, NYG	68	109	142	36
Ertz, PHI	101	103	108	34
Punters				
Team	No	Yds	FG	LAvg
M. Dickson, SEA	68	325	69	48
Swain, PIT	68	329	69	48
A. Lee, ARI	84	404	64	48
Mostard, NOR	55	164	60	47
Hecker, LA	68	299	65	47
O'Donnell, CHI	58	297	65	45
S. Martin, DET	66	290	61	45
Dixon, NYG	64	292	60	45
Way, WAS	72	320	63	45
Chris Jones, DAL	31	238	63	45
Punt returns				
Team	No	Yds	LAvg	Long
Cohen, CHI	21	413	19.7	70
Shells, MIN	23	276	12.0	70
Natson, LA	24	243	11.0	60
Kirk, ARI	21	154	7.3	44
A. Humphries, TAM	19	130	6.8	16
Lockett, SEA	23	130	5.7	19
Kickoff returns				
Team	No	Yds	LAvg	Long
C. Coleman, NYG	20	525	26.2	97
R. James, SFO	21	526	25.0	53
M. Hall, ATL	21	526	25.0	53

Touchdowns				
Team	TD	Rush	Rst	Pts
Kareem Hunt, KC	14	7	0	84
Conner, PIT	13	12	1	82
M. Gordon, LAC	13	9	0	82
A. Brown, PIT	13	0	13	78
Swain, PIT	12	0	12	78
T. Hill, KC	12	0	11	72
H. Kirk, TEN	10	1	11	66
D. Hopkins, HOU	11	1	1	62
M. Williams, LAC	11	0	1	62
Scoring				
Team	TD	Rush	Rst	Pts
Kareem Hunt, KC	14	7	0	84
Conner, PIT	13	12	1	82
M. Gordon, LAC	13	9	0	82
A. Brown, PIT	13	0	13	78
Swain, PIT	12	0	12	78
T. Hill, KC	12	0	11	72
H. Kirk, TEN	10	1	11	66
D. Hopkins, HOU	11	1	1	62
M. Williams, LAC	11	0	1	62
Team statistics				
Team	Yards	Rush	Pts	LAvg
Kansas City	427.3	144.4	312.9	28.2
Indianapolis	383.5	107.9	275.6	26.1
New England	395.0	116.6	278.4	26.1
LA Chargers	392.0	121.9	270.1	26.1
Baltimore	369.6	141.9	227.8	26.1
Cleveland	355.8	121.2	234.6	26.1
Denver	323.3	123.2	200.1	26.1
Cincinnati	348.9	99.1	249.8	26.1
Cincinnati	326.2	103.9	222.3	26.1
San Francisco	319.2	110.3	208.9	26.1
Tennessee	317.8	130.8	187.0	26.1
Buffalo	302.1	112.6	189.5	26.1
N.Y. Jets	298.4	105.1	193.3	26.1
Miami	293.4	124.7	168.7	26.1
DEFENSE				
Team	Yards	Rush	Pts	LAvg
Baltimore	290.2	104.3	185.9	26.1
Buffalo	292.2	104.8	187.4	26.1
Jacksonville	318.4	118.6	199.8	26.1
Tennessee	320.0	110.3	209.7	26.1
LA Chargers	329.1	103.7	225.4	26.1
Pittsburgh	318.5	96.9	221.6	26.1
Indianapolis	341.5	103.6	237.9	26.1
Houston	346.6	88.3	258.3	26.1
N.Y. Jets	359.4	128.9	230.5	26.1
New England	372.7	116.2	256.5	26.1
San Francisco	381.4	121.7	259.7	26.1
Oakland	385.2	144.4	238.8	26.1
Cleveland	401.1	126.1	275.1	26.1
San Francisco	402.3	126.1	276.2	26.1
Kansas City	409.4	126.9	282.5	26.1
Cincinnati	413.0	142.4	270.6	26.1

NFC					
Week 15					
Quarterbacks					
	Att	Com	Yds	TD	Int
Ryan, ATL	538	376	4307	30	1
Goff, LA	512	330	4273	27	10
A. Rodgers, GBY	537	377	3974	23	10
Cousins, MIN	454	384	3913	26	10
Manning, NYG	502	331	3699	18	10
Brees, NOR	450	303	3191	31	10
Newton, CAR	471	320	3365	24	13
Stafford, DET	431	329	3395	19	11
Prescott, DAL	457	309	3337	17	11
Wentz, PHI	401	279	3074	21	7
Rushers					
	Att	Yds	Avg	LG	TD
E. Elliott, DAL	286	1349	4.7	41	6
Gurley, LA	256	1251	4.9	36	17
Barkley, NYG	223	1151	5.2	78	23
McCaffrey, CAR	194	979	5.0	59	7
A. Peterson, WAS	221	92	0.4	13	90
C. Carson, SEA	201	913	4.5	26	6
Kamara, NOR	187	86	4.6	49	12
Dw. Johnson, ARI	231	84	0.4	36	53
Breida, SAN	149	794	5.3	66	1
J. Howard, CHI	216	73	3.6	25	6
Receivers					
	Att	Yds	Avg	LG	TD
Ju. Jones, ATL	100	1511	15.1	58	8
M. Evans, TAM	74	1387	17.9	72	5
D. Adams, GBY	100	1315	13.2	57	7
M. Thomas, NOR	109	1267	11.6	72	8
Thielen, MIN	78	1154	14.8	75	5
Kittle, SAN	72	1156	16.0	85	4
Allen, WAS	73	1154	15.8	74	5
R. Woods, LA	72	1105	14.2	36	4

## NFL/SPORTS BRIEFS



KELVIN Kuo/AP

The Los Angeles Chargers placed seven players in the Pro Bowl, including safety Derwin James, above, one of six rookies across the league to make the game, which will be played Jan. 27 in Orlando.

# Chargers lead Pro Bowl selections with 7 players

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The Los Angeles Chargers placed seven players in the Pro Bowl, including safety Derwin James, one of six rookies across the league to make the game.

James, a first-round draft choice, will be joined on the AFC squad by veteran quarterback Philip Rivers, wide receiver Keenan Allen, running back Melvin Gordon, defensive end Melvin Ingram, center Mike Pouncey and special-teamer Adrian Phillips for the game, which will be played Jan. 27 in Orlando. James and Phillips are the only starters.

Rivers is a backup to Kansas City's Patrick Mahomes, one of 29 first-time Pro Bowlers. That, of course, includes all the rookies: James, Giants running back Saquon Barkley, Seahawks punter Michael Dickson, Broncos running back Phillip Lindsay, Indianapolis guard Quenton Nelson and Cleveland cornerback Denzel Ward. Lindsay is an undrafted player.

New England's Tom Brady is the other AFC quarterback, making it for the 14th time. Noticeably missing is the Colts' Andrew Luck.

New Orleans, led by quarterback Drew Brees, Dallas and Chicago paced the NFC with five players each. Brees is the starter, backed up by Green Bay's Aaron Rodgers and the Rams' Jared Goff.

Buffalo, Oakland and Tampa Bay had no Pro Bowl selections. Pittsburgh and Kansas City each had six players chosen, including such first-timers as Steelers running back James Conner and Mahomes, both having breakthrough years.

Cleveland has a first overall

## Rosters

**Sunday, Jan. 27**  
**At Camping World Stadium**  
**Orlando, Fla.**  
**(x-denotes starter)**

**AFC OFFENSE**  
**Quarterbacks:** Tom Brady, New England; x-Patrick Mahomes, Kansas City; Philip Rivers, L.A. Chargers  
**Tight ends:** Eric Ebron, Indianapolis; x-Travis Kelce, Kansas City  
**Wide receivers:** Keenan Allen, L.A. Chargers; Antonio Brown, Pittsburgh; Tyreek Hill, Kansas City; x-Andre Hopkins, Houston  
**Tackles:** Eric Fisher, Kansas City; x-Taylor Lewen, Tennessee; x-Alejandro Villanueva, Pittsburgh  
**Guards:** x-David DeCastro, Pittsburgh; Quenton Nelson, Indianapolis; x-Marshall Yanda, Baltimore  
**Running backs:** x-James Conner, Pittsburgh; Melvin Gordon, L.A. Chargers; Phillip Lindsay, Denver  
**Centers:** x-Maurice Pouncey, Pittsburgh; Mike Pouncey, L.A. Chargers  
**DEFENSE**  
**Defensive ends:** x-Myles Garrett, Cleveland; Melvin Ingram, L.A. Chargers; x-J.J. Watt, Houston  
**Inside/middle linebackers:** Benardrick McKinney, Houston; x-C.J. Mosley, Baltimore  
**Interior linemen:** x-Geno Atkins, Cincinnati; x-Jurrell Casey, Tennessee; Cameron Heyward, Pittsburgh  
**Cornerbacks:** Stephon Gilmore, New England; x-Xavier Howard, Miami; Jalen Ramsey, Jacksonville; Denzel Ward, Cleveland  
**Outside linebackers:** x-Jadeveon Clowney, Houston; Dee Ford, Kansas City; x-Von Miller, Denver  
**Free safeties:** x-Derwin James, L.A. Chargers; x-Wesley, Baltimore  
**Strong safety:** x-Jamal Adams, N.Y. Jets  
**SPECIALISTS**  
**Kicker:** x-Brett Kern, Tennessee  
**Placekicker:** x-Jason Myers, N.Y. Jets  
**N.Y. Jets**  
**Special teamer:** x-Adrian Phillips, L.A. Chargers

**NFC OFFENSE**  
**Quarterbacks:** x-Drew Brees, New Orleans; Jared Goff, L.A. Rams; Aaron Rodgers, Green Bay  
**Wide receivers:** x-Zach Ertz, Philadelphia; George Kittle, San Francisco  
**Guards:** x-Brandon Brooks, Philadelphia; x-Zack Martin, Dallas; Trail Turner, Carolina  
**Running backs:** Saquon Barkley, N.Y. Giants; Ezekiel Elliott, Dallas; x-Todd Gurley, L.A. Rams  
**Centers:** x-Alex Mack, Atlanta; Max Under New Orleans  
**Fullback:** x-Wyle Juszczyk, San Francisco  
**DEFENSE**  
**Defensive ends:** Danielle Hunter, Minnesota; x-Cameron Jordan, New Orleans; x-Demarcus Lawrence, Dallas  
**Inside/middle linebackers:** x-Luke Kuechly, Carolina; Bobby Wagner, Seattle  
**Interior linemen:** x-Fletcher Cox, Philadelphia; x-Aaron Donald, L.A. Rams; Akiem Hicks, Chicago  
**Cornerbacks:** x-Kyle Fuller, Chicago; Byron Jones, Dallas; x-Patrick Peterson, Arizona; Darrius Slay, Detroit  
**Outside linebackers:** Anthony Barr, Minnesota; x-Ryan Kerrigan, Washington; x-Khalil Mack, Chicago  
**Free safeties:** x-Eddie Jackson, Chicago; Harrison Smith, Minnesota  
**Strong safety:** Landon Collins, N.Y. Giants  
**SPECIALISTS**  
**Punter:** x-Michael Dickson, Seattle  
**Placekickers:** x-Aldrick Ross, N.Y. Giants  
**Return specialist:** x-Tarik Cohen, Chicago  
**Special teamer:** x-Cory Littleton, L.A. Rams

draft choice in the game — not Baker Mayfield, but 2017 top pick Myles Garrett at defensive end.

Among the perennial AFC choices returning to the game are Houston DE J.J. Watt, Pittsburgh WR Antonio Brown, Baltimore guard Marshal Yanda and safety Eric Wedder. Cincinnati DT Geno Atkins and Denver LB Von

Miller.

For the NFC, frequent repeaters include Atlanta WR Julio Jones and C Alex Mack, Dallas tackle Tyrion Smith, inside LBs Luke Kuechly of Carolina and Bobby Wagner of Seattle, Arizona CB Patrick Peterson, Rams DT Aaron Donald and Bears LB Khalil Mack.

## Briefly

# Source: Fields listed in transfer database

Associated Press

Georgia freshman quarterback Justin Fields was listed Tuesday night in the NCAA's transfer database among the players who have notified their school of their intention to leave, a person with access to database told The Associated Press.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the NCAA's so-called transfer portal is not public. The person also provided a screenshot to the AP showing Fields listed in the database, with an NCAA identification number and a date initiated of Dec. 18, 2018.

Being listed in the portal means other schools can now contact and recruit Fields, the former five-star prospect from Kennesaw, Ga. NCAA rules would require Fields to sit out next season if he transfers, though he could request a hardship waiver to become immediately eligible.

Georgia has made no announcement about Fields' plans. Coach Kirby Smart closed Wednesday's Sugar Bowl practice to reporters.

In other college football news: ■ Oklahoma won the Joe Moore Award, given to the team with the best offensive line in the country.

The Sooners were announced Tuesday as the winner of the fourth Joe Moore Award, named after the late offensive line coach for Pittsburgh and Notre Dame. The other finalists were Alabama and Georgia.

Oklahoma's line features tackles Bobby Evans and Cody Ford, a third-team All-American; guards Ben Powers and Dru Samia, a second-team All-American; and center Creed Humphrey.

## Brantley, Astros finalize \$32M, 2-year contract

HOUSTON — Free agent outfielder Michael Brantley and the Houston Astros finalized a \$32 million, two-year contract on Wednesday.

The 31-year-old had spent his entire 10-year career with the Cleveland Indians, where he was a three-time All-Star.

Brantley is a career .295 hitter and gives Houston an upgrade to an outfield anchored by center fielder George Springer.

Brantley hit .309 with 17 homers, 36 doubles and 76 RBIs in 143 games last season, making 134 starts in left field. He had a \$12 million base salary and earned \$100,000 in bonuses.

## Stuehec sweeps downhill, super-G races in Italy

SELVA DI VAL GARDENA, Italy — Slovenian skier Ilka Stuehec overcame an error in the middle of her run to win a World Cup super-G on Wednesday and sweep the speed races on the Sellaronda course.

Following her downhill victory

from Tuesday, Stuehec finished a slim 0.05 seconds ahead of Tina Weirather of Liechtenstein and Nicole Schmidhofer of Austria, who tied for second.

Stuehec missed all of last season after tearing the anterior cruciate ligament in her left knee during a crash while training on the glacier in Pitztal, Austria. The season before, Stuehec won the gold medal at the world championships in St. Moritz, Switzerland, and captured the season-long World Cup downhill title.

In other skiing news: ■ Zan Kranjec became the first Slovenian skier to win a men's World Cup giant slalom on Wednesday, hours after countrywoman Ilka Stuehec won a women's super-G in Italy.

Kranjec was more than a half-second off the lead in fourth after the opening run at Saalbach-Hinterglemm, Austria, but leaders Matts Olsson of Sweden and Manuel Feller of Austria both failed to finish their final runs.

Loic Meillard of Switzerland was 0.19 seconds behind in second, and Matthieu Faivre of France was 0.50 behind in third.

## Sabres place suspended Berglund on waivers

BUFFALO, N.Y. — The Buffalo Sabres have placed suspended forward Patrik Berglund on unconditional waivers for the purpose of terminating his contract.

The team declined further comment in announcing the move Wednesday. Berglund was suspended by the Sabres on Saturday for failing to report to the team for its road game at Washington.

He missed the team's last five games, including two last week when coach Phil Housley said Berglund was sidelined by an illness.

The 30-year-old Swede has two goals and two assists in 23 games. Buffalo acquired Berglund in July as part of a four-player trade that sent center Ryan O'Reilly to the Blues.

## Austin finalizes deal for new MLS stadium

Officials in Austin, Texas, have finalized a partnership for a new 20,000-seat stadium for the eventual Major League Soccer club Austin FC.

The deal with PreCrout Sports Ventures will build a \$225 million privately funded stadium on city land. It would open in spring 2021 when Austin FC is expected to start playing.

The stadium project was born out of Columbus Crew owner Anthony Precourt's efforts to relocate the franchise to Austin. That plan drew fierce resistance from Crew fans as well as local and state officials in Ohio. The Crew are expected to stay in Columbus under a new ownership group led by Cleveland Browns owners Jimmy and Dee Haslam.



## SPORTS



**Chargers lead way**  
San Diego lands seven players  
on team for Orlando » **Page 31**

## COLLEGE BASKETBALL

# Perfectly surprising

## Undefeated Furman quietly building case for NCAA Tournament

By PETE IACOBELLI  
Associated Press

GREENVILLE, S.C. — Furman forward Clay Mounce has a simple question in the team video before the Paladins take the court each home game: "Haven't you heard of us?"

Not many college basketball fans have.

Though it's a question fewer people are asking about Furman, which is in the Top 25 for the first time. The undefeated Paladins (12-0) have road wins over last year's Final Four

participant Loyola Chicago and defending national champ Villanova.

Nonetheless, most college basketball fans probably haven't bought into the plucky Paladins yet and Furman forward Matt Rafferty said with a grin, "I don't know if they will."

But Furman, which won two games last week and still dropped a spot to No. 24, has an opportunity for another résumé-building road win when the Paladins travel to LSU on Friday night for their final game before starting Southern Conference play.

**SEE PERFECTLY ON PAGE 26**



Furman's Clay Mounce, right, and UNC-Wilmington's Jaylen Sims watch as Mounce hits one of his six three-pointers Saturday. Furman won 93-50.

RICHARD SHIRO/AP

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